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REFLECTIONS

ON THE

FOUR PRINCIPAL RELIGIONS,

WHICH HAVE OBTAINED IN THE WORLD ;

PAGANISM, MOHAMMEDISM, JUDAISM, AND
CHRISTIANITY ;

ALSO ON THE

CHURCH OF ENGLAND, AND OTHER DENOMI-
NATIONS OF PROTESTANTS :

AND ON

Evangelical Religion.

BY THE LATE REV. DAVID WILLIAMSON,

MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL, WHITEHAVEN.

A state of innocence we can only conceive, if indeed, in our present misery, it be possible to conceive it ; but the sentiments and worship proper to a fallen and offending being, we have all to learn, as we have all to practise.—Dr. JOHNSON'S LIVES OF THE BRITISH POETS.—LIFE OF MILTON



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ON CALVINISM AND CALVINISTS.

WE have hitherto trodden on ground, common to the orthodox professors of Christianity ; we now enter the disputed and debatable regions, where men celebrated for their piety, for their learning, and for their penetration, find themselves engaged in opposite systems, which too often have drawn them into acrimonious disputes, and into a state of mutual repulsion. It shall be our business, without entering into the controversy ourselves, to state the claims of both parties, and the objections with which they mutually assail each other. On no subject, perhaps, is accuracy more a desideratum, than on that before us. Such have been the mis-statements, on both sides of the question, that too many partisans of each, seem resolved not to know what the tenets are, that have been embraced by their opponents. The name of Calvin has, by one part of the Christian Church, been raised to a distinction and eminence, almost equal with those of the Apostles, and his decisions esteemed almost oracular. By another part, it has been associated with every thing that is oppro-

brious and vile, and his sentiments represented as a compound of blasphemy and madness. The remark, made by Mr. Pope, seems not to have been without foundation:—

“One thinks, on Calvin, Heaven’s own spirit fell;
Another deems him instrument of hell.
If Calvin feels Heaven’s blessing, or its rod,
This cries there is, and that, there is no God.”*

If the panegyrics of his admirers have been somewhat extravagant, it must be allowed, that the unmeasured censures of some of the opposers of his system, have been not only unjust, but rancorous; and often pronounced with little previous knowledge of the doctrines he embraced and taught. All who are competent and impartial judges will allow, that his natural powers were of a high order; that his learning was great and various; that his eloquence was strong and attractive; that his piety was fervent; that his virtue was disinterested and exemplary; and that his labours in the cause of religion were unwearied, and almost unexampled. On the other hand, his fondness for systematic divinity made him, sometimes, perhaps, adopt conclusions, without sufficiently examining the premises on which they were founded; and in filling up his *Institutes of Christianity*, some of the harsher parts may be supposed to have been introduced, to fill up, and to give a rotundity to the *great* outlines of the system, which are, unquestionably, the fundamental doctrines of the Gospel. The unrelenting spirit of persecution which Calvin had imbibed, and which he showed in bringing the wretched Servetus to the flames, for deny-

* Essay on Man, Epistle iv.

ing the Divinity of Christ, is the only foul blot that stains his character. But, though the circumstance forms no apology for his intolerant principles and conduct, it is but just it should be remembered, that Queen Elizabeth, that her successor, James I, and that Cranmer, were chargeable with similar acts of atrocious cruelty and injustice.

The orthodox religious world is divided into two great bodies, the followers of Calvin, who are called Calvinists, from their embracing either the whole, or from their embracing a distinguishing part of the doctrines taught by that divine; and the followers of Arminius, a disciple of Beza, and a celebrated professor of divinity, at Leyden. The ground in dispute between these two parties, has often been gone over, and every inch of it keenly attacked and defended, and much unhallowed censure, invective, and recrimination, have been thrown by the parties upon each other: as if both parties, while they debated about the truths of Christianity, had agreed, in contending for their respective systems, to forget the meekness and gentleness of Christ. They have, likewise, in various instances, by their mis-statements of one another's sentiments, so entangled and perplexed the controversy, that it is no easy thing for the observers to ascertain, what is Calvinism, or what is Arminianism.

When the controversy first began to be agitated between the contending parties, it commonly obtained the name of the *Quinquarticular Controversy*, because the leading tenets of Calvinism comprehended these five things:—Particular Election, Particular Redemption, the Moral Impability and Condemnation of Man in his Fallen State; Irresistible Grace; and the final Perseverance of the Saints. The first of these points, we find thus stated

by Mr. Adams, and Mr. Evans. "That God has chosen a *certain number* in Christ, to everlasting glory, before the foundation of the world, according to his immutable purpose, and of his free grace and love, without the least foresight of faith, good works, or any conditions performed by the creatures, and that the rest of mankind he was pleased to *pass by*, and ordain them to dishonour and wrath, for their sins, to the praise of his vindictive justice." Mr. Adams refers, in a note, to the third chapter of the Westminster Confession of Faith. Now impartiality requires it should be stated, that according to this representation, Calvinists are made to deny God's foresight of faith and good works, whereas, it is a doctrine of all Calvinists, that God hath chosen his elect people to faith and good works, which necessarily supposes his foresight of both, and his certain provision for both. To the accurate statement of the doctrine of Calvinists, the words left out should have been inserted thus:—"Without any foresight of faith, or good works, or perseverance in either of them, or any other thing in the creature, *as conditions, or causes moving him thereunto.*" This is the statement of the Westminster Confession, and is very different from the garbled account given of it. The two last words of the sentence are not in the Confession. Instead of "vindictive justice," the words are "glorious justice." All writers should, on controverted subjects, quote accurately, and from authentic and public documents. The words, *vindictive justice*, seem harsh, though they have been used by some Calvinists. Mr. Fuller observes, on this subject,—“I believe it is very common for people, when they speak of vindictive punishment, to mean that kind of punishment which is inflicted from a wrathful disposition, or a disposition to

punish, for the pleasure of punishing. Now if this be the meaning of our opponents, we have no dispute with them. We do not suppose the Almighty to punish sinners, for the sake of putting them to pain. Neither the language of Scripture, nor the system of Calvinists conveys any such idea. Vindictive punishment, as it is here defended, stands opposed to that punishment which is merely *corrective*; the one is exercised for the good of the party, the other not so, but for the good of the community."*

The Westminster Confession certainly contains the doctrine of Reprobation, though it does not use the word, and with the exception of the two words we have mentioned, the quotation is fair enough. It is also certain that Calvin, in his Institutes, teaches the same doctrine (Liber. 3). Of modern Calvinists, some seem to think that this, or something like it, is a legitimate inference from the doctrine of Particular Election. They think that the choosing of some, necessarily supposes the passing by of others. "It has been stated that the word reprobation is not found in Scripture, nor any original word answering to it; and that *reprobate*, and *reprobates* are never used with relation to this subject. The opposite to elect, and election, ought not, therefore, to be called reprobation; but some other word should be employed to convey the idea. Some have used the term *preterition*, which is more exactly expressive of our meaning; but neither is this scriptural. The truth is, the Scriptures say a great deal about the elect and election, and predestination to life, but are nearly silent as to those who are not chosen unto salvation." "If Calvinists had been as

* Calvinistical and Socinian Systems Compared, Letter vii.

reserved in speaking on the awful subject, as the sacred writers are, only dropping a few occasional intimations in respect of it; probably it would have abated the odium which, by some means or other, has been attached to these sentiments."*

Other modern Calvinists, who believe in the doctrine of Particular Election, entirely separate it from any decree of reprobation, or of preterition. To the argument, that Particular Election includes any decree of this kind, a respectable writer replies, "That it takes for granted, what can never be proved, that non-election implies a *decree*. Non-election is a negative idea, *not* electing; but to decree a negative is as absurd as to decree nothing; or to *decree not to decree*. The notion of decreeing to *permit*, involves the same absurdity; for to permit in this connexion, is not to hinder; but to decree not to hinder, is the same as to decree to do nothing; or as before, to decree not to decree. The fallacy consists in the supposition that non-election is a positive idea, and therefore requires a positive determination, by way of decree. The truth of the case is, that on the supposition" (he argues upon the supposition, that the number of mankind were two millions, and of these one million only elected) "of one million being elected to holiness, as the means, and happiness as the end, the other million is not elected to holiness and happiness. These two things are as opposite, as doing, and not doing; but to suppose an infinitely perfect being to decree what he does not do, is incompatible; for it supposes him to decree to do what he decrees not to do. It is indeed, perfectly scriptural

* Mr. Scott's Remarks on Bishop Tomline's Refutation of Calvinism, p. p. 154, 155, 156.—Vol. 2.

and rational to say, that whatever is done by an infinitely wise Being, is done according to *design*, an unvarying purpose, which is commonly termed a decree. But what meaning can there be in his designing to do the contrast to his doing? The same reasoning is applicable to preterition.* "The great majority of those who pass under the general denomination in modern times, regard some of Calvin's positions as mere exceptionable inferences, which he has drawn from parts of his own system, with too much haste, or too little caution. They consider these inferences (especially some deduced from the doctrine of Divine decrees) as injurious excrescences, which deform the general beauty of his theological scheme, and which do not contribute to its real strength. In brief, they considered his fundamental premises, viewed in their proper light, as neither requiring nor admitting some of his conclusions, which have given just offence to a large portion of Christians, who still retain his name, —and who are induced to retain it (as a term of distinction) because they apprehend that no other of the Reformers, of whatever country, nor even any of the Christian Fathers, have so beautifully exhibited, or so ably defended, the scripture doctrine of Sovereign Grace."† The seventeenth Article of the Church of England makes no mention whatsoever of either reprobation or preterition, though some Calvinists have supposed that the following expressions are not without some reference to something of this kind: "For curious and carnal persons, lacking the Spirit of Christ, to have continually before their eyes the sentence of God's predestination, is a

* Defence of Modern Calvinism, by E. Williams, D.D. p. 206.

† Ditto, Preface, p. p. 4, 5.

most dangerous downfall, whereby the devil doth thrust them either into desperation, or into wretchlessness of most unclean living, no less perilous than desperation."—Most of those who are members of the Church of England, and have embraced the doctrine of Particular Election, consider this as perfectly sufficient, with its necessary consequence, the final perseverance of the saints; and contending for nothing more, disencumber themselves from the other appendages of Calvin's system. From the statement of Dr. Williams, it appears that sentiments of the same kind are generally prevalent among the Independent dissenters, and indeed these are known to have been the sentiments of Dr. Watts, of Dr. Dodridge, and of many other excellent men, who were ornaments to the dissenting churches. In the Established Church of Scotland, though it is known that a considerable majority are in no respect whatever, calvinistical, and that many fall far short of the evangelical sentiments of Arminius, yet it is understood that there are a number of pious men, who, while they believe in Particular Election and final Perseverance, wish, for reasons such as those mentioned by Mr. Scott, to carry the doctrine of Predestination no further; and would, on this subject, give a decided preference to the language of the seventeenth Article of the English Church, when compared with that of the third chapter of the Westminster Confession. Comparatively few of those who assume the name, or of those upon whom the name of Calvinists is imposed, embrace any more of Calvin's system upon the subject of Predestination, than what is here stated. Even these doctrines which they acknowledge, are seldom made by the Ministers of the Gospel, the topics of public discussion, or brought into prominence, in the course of religious instruction delivered from

the pulpit. Of the religious instructions they dispense, the great subjects are those which they receive, in common with all who believe in the evangelical doctrines of the Gospel.—It is certain that Luther carried the doctrine of Predestination to as high a point as Calvin, and embraced those parts of the system, which most modern Calvinists consider as objectionable. Whoever reads the answer of Luther to Erasmus (who had attacked Luther on the subjects of Predestination and Grace) entitled “*De Servo Arbitrio*,” will find a defence of High Calvinism, written with great spirit, and much eloquence, accompanied sometimes by intemperate personal reflections.

Those who declare themselves hostile to absolute and particular election, in the most guarded state of the doctrines, generally attack it on the side of reprobation, which they contend is, whatever modifications you please to adopt, inseparable from it, and its necessary and obvious consequence. To this argument, the reply of modern Calvinists is in substance as follows. They allow that Calvin himself thought so, and affirmed it to be so. “Many,” says he, “as it were to excuse God, own election, and deny reprobation. But this is silly and childish. For election cannot stand without reprobation. Whom God passes by, those he reprobates. It is one and the same thing.”—*Inst. Liber. 3, Cap. 23, Sect. 1.* But as they consider themselves bound, not by the decisions of Calvin, but by those of scripture, they adopt his conclusions, only so far as they are founded on its declarations. They can, they say, see no connexion between the certainty of the salvation of some, and the necessary reprobation of others. Suppose, say they, that with respect to twenty men on the same journey, God has decreed that ten of them shall arrive, in safety, at the

place of rest which they have in prospect; would the consequence be that the other ten must necessarily perish by the way? Certainly not. The word of God, they add, assures us that *whosoever* shall call on the name of the Lord, shall be saved; and we not only believe the words of Christ, "All that the Father giveth me, shall come to me," but we receive those that follow with the same faith, "And him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out." In short, we believe, say they, that the invitations and promises of God are as firm and certain as his decrees; and, if we are unable, in every instance, to investigate the awful depths of the latter, we leave the solution of all such difficulties to that day, in which God shall vindicate his ways to all intelligent beings.

To the doctrine of absolute decrees it has often been objected, that it is utterly irreconcilable with the freedom of human action, and has a tendency to introduce the principles of necessity and fatalism. Almost all Calvinists deny the consequence, and assert the freedom of human action, in language as pointed as that which is employed by those who range themselves on the opposite side of the question. They frankly acknowledge, that they are not able to show how the liberty of the human will, and the freedom of action, are consistent with decrees of God. But, as both these doctrines are taught in the word of God, they say they believe them to be perfectly consistent. When pressed on this subject, they observe that the very same difficulty attends the doctrine of Divine foreknowledge, which Mr. Locke confessed he could not reconcile with human liberty. It must be acknowledged, say they, that on these subjects, and even upon some principles of natural religion, there is a veil

thrown, which human sagacity seeks, in vain, to penetrate, or to remove. But whoever acknowledges the freedom of human action, the essential difference between virtue and vice, between obedience and rebellion, allows all that is necessary to legislation and moral government.

It is likewise objected, that upon the doctrine of absolute decrees, all exertions of diligence in performing our duty, and in escaping from sin, are unnecessary, because they must needs be ineffectual. To this objection, Calvinists answer, that the connexion of means with the end, is just as necessary, upon their principles, as upon those of the opposite system. That as they expect no man to be saved, but in the way of continuing in well-doing, and in showing diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end, that depending on the Divine blessing, in the use of means, they despair of no man's salvation. The most ordinary observer of what passes in society cannot, they think, but acknowledge, that with respect to all the affairs of this life, the belief of absolute decrees is never perceived to abate the diligent exertions of the man who entertains it. The farmer who believes in predestination, tills his lands, sows his seed, and uses every means to secure a crop, as diligently as he who holds no such doctrine. Or, if there be any difference, it proceeds not from the doctrines he believes, but from the habits he has formed, or from his natural indolence. He cannot consistently believe, that his success, with respect to the blessings of the eternal world, is less connected with means, than the success of his hopes in the present life. The decrees of God, whatever they are, have just as much connexion with the affairs of this life, as they have with the concerns of eternity. "If the counsels of God are absolutely fixed," says a very sensible writer on this sub-

ject, " it has been said they shall be executed, whatever may happen, and, consequently, exhortations to duty, are preposterous, and the use of means to avoid one thing, and to obtain another, is idle labour. The objection has a specious appearance, which dazzles superficial thinkers ; but it is founded on mistake, or in intentional misrepresentation. It proceeds upon the idea, that the decrees of God are determinations respecting certain ends or events, without a reference to the means, which is to attribute a procedure to Him who is wonderful in council, which would be unworthy of any of his creatures, endowed with only a small portion of reason. The objection first separates things, which cannot, in fact, be disjoined, the means and the end, and then holding up the doctrine of the Divine decrees, in this mangled and distorted light, pronounces it to be absurd. With whatever parade and confidence, therefore, it has been brought forward, it has no relation to the subject, and is only of use to destroy an extravagant and senseless theory, which has been substituted in the room of the doctrine of scripture.

" When God decreed an event, he, at the same time, decreed that it should take place, in consequence of a train of other events, or as the result of certain previous circumstances. Thus he did not purpose to save Paul, and his companions, unconditionally, but by means of the seamen remaining on board, to manage the ship, till it should be driven on the coast of Melita. In the same manner, he has not determined to save sinners, let them live as they will, but he has chosen them to salvation, ' through sanctification of the spirit, and belief of the truth.' To say, therefore, that unless the means be employed, the ends cannot be accomplished, is to assert a very simple and self-evident truth, that the purposes of

God cannot be fulfilled, unless they be fulfilled. Had Paul and his company been preserved without the aid of the sailors, the decree of God would not have been executed, nor would it be executed, if it were possible for a sinner to escape eternal perdition, without faith and repentance. The same event is supposed in both cases, but it is brought to pass in a different way from what God had ordained. Let us always remember that the means make a part of the Divine decrees, as well as the end. The system of things is like a chain, composed of many links, on each of which the union and consistence of the whole depend. If one link were broken, the chain would be destroyed. None of his purposes, therefore, can be defeated, because the means of carrying them into effect are provided, and shall be brought into action at the proper season."*

The doctrine of absolute decrees is charged with being at variance with the tender expostulations of the Gospel with sinners, and with those invitations of grace by which they are entreated to be reconciled to God, and with such declarations as show, that he has no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live. Calvinists generally reply, that they believe the sincerity of those invitations, expostulations, and declarations, as readily and firmly, as they do in absolute decrees, and for the same reason, because they find them both in the word of God ; and that they believe the latter to be perfectly consistent with the former, although they are not able to show that they are so. They affirm that it is not their business to clear up those difficulties which, in several instances, attend both the doctrines of natural

* Mr. Dick's Lectures on some Passages of the Acts, Lect. 29.

religion, and the truths of Christianity. They can, they say, easily show that the doctrine of absolute decrees, is contained in the word of God, and having done this, they contend that they have nothing more to do.

With respect to the decrees of God, Calvinists have been divided into two opinions. We shall give the statement of these from a writer who was himself a Calvinist, and who possessed talents of the most respectable kind. "Calvinists are divided upon this subject into two sorts, commonly called Supralapsarians and Sublapsarians. The reasons of the names are, from the one being of opinion that God in ordaining the elect and reprobate, considered man as before the fall; and the other as fallen, and in a state of guilt.

"The first say, that in laying down a plan, what is last in the execution is first in the intention; that God purposed to glorify his mercy and justice in the everlasting felicity of some, called vessels of mercy; and in the everlasting perdition of others, called vessels of wrath. That to accomplish this purpose he resolved to create the world, to put man into a condition in which he would certainly fall. To send the Redeemer in the fulness of time to carry on the whole plan of salvation, as we now find it in the oracles of truth.

"The Sublapsarians say that the order of purposing, should be the same as the order of execution. That the decrees of God being eternal, there can no order of time be applied to them, but that which takes place in the execution. Therefore they say, that God proposed to make man innocent and holy, with powers to preserve his innocence, but liable to fall: that he foresaw the fall, and permitted it, and from the corrupted mass freely chose some as the objects of mercy, and left others to perish in the

ruins of their apostacy, and that to accomplish this purpose he resolved to send the Saviour, &c."*

Mr. Evans, in his Sketch, makes the Supralapsarians maintain, "that God had, from all eternity decreed the transgression of Adam, in such a manner, that our first parents *could not possibly avoid* this fatal event." If these are the words of any Calvinist, it will be impossible to vindicate him from the charge of making God the author of sin; a supposition in itself horrible. The Westminster Confession, by making the fall of man the subject of a decree, seems to fall in with the doctrine of the Supralapsarians, in one point of view; though of such nice distinction, it very properly takes no notice whatsoever. Its language is very different, indeed, from the words we have quoted from Mr. Evans. "God, from all eternity did, by the most wise and holy counsel of his own will, freely and unchangeably ordain whatsoever comes to pass; yet so, as thereby neither is God the author of sin, nor is violence offered to the will of the creatures, nor is the liberty or contingency of second causes taken away, but rather established."—3. In the shorter Catechism the answer to the thirteenth question is thus:—"Our first parents being left to the *freedom of their own will*, fell from the estate wherein they were created, by sinning against God."

Whatever opinion we form of the doctrines of Calvinism, few men who are able impartially to review the conduct of many Calvinists, will deny, that they have been too much addicted to nice and subtle speculations; and of this kind, we fear, the distinction between Supralapsarians,

* Dr. Witherspoon's Lectures on Divinity, Lect. 12.

and Sublapsarians, will be found to be one striking instance. To those modern Calvinists, who adopt no more of the system of Calvin, than particular election, all such distinctions are utterly unknown. Indeed, these distinctions are now seldom mentioned, even by Calvinists of the highest form. Such speculations seem to be too high for the limited capacities of the human mind. Some Calvinists have speculated upon the decrees of God, till they have brought themselves to deny the propriety of all addresses and exhortations to sinners; though the use of such addresses and exhortations is sanctioned by the universal practice of the Apostles, and first preachers of Christianity.

The texts of Scripture from which the Calvinists conclude that the doctrine of particular election is taught in the word of God, are in general so many, and so well known, that we shall not swell this article with an account of them. They may be found in every controversial performance on that side of the question.

The second subject of dispute between the Calvinists and Arminians was about Redemption. The former contended for particular, and the latter for general or universal Redemption. Many Calvinists have maintained, that the Father's Election and the Son's Redemption are of precisely the same extent, and that Christ paid the price of Redemption by his blood for none but those whom he saves by the efficacious grace of his Holy Spirit. They consider such declarations of our Saviour as follow, decisive upon this subject. "I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd giveth his life for the *sheep*."—John x. 11. "That he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast *given him*."—xvii. 2. "This is the Father's will who hath sent me, that of all which he hath *given me*, I should

lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.”—vi. 39. They consider the Apostle’s argument, “Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God’s elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died,” (Rom. viii. 33, 34,) as proving that Christ’s death was the ransom paid for the elect, through which they are delivered from condemnation. They argue again, that our Saviour’s death and intercession are of the same extent; that as our Saviour expressly says, “I pray not for the world,” (John, xvii. 9,) the necessary consequence is, that he did not die for it. There are many more arguments employed by some Calvinists, to prove the doctrine of particular redemption. He who wishes to see a full state of the arguments for particular redemption, will find them stated at large in four sermons, in the first volume of the Lime-street Lectures.—The Arminians contend for general, or universal redemption. This doctrine they think sufficiently proved by such texts as the following:—“God will have *all men* to be saved; and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom *for all*.”—1 Tim. ii. 4, 5, 6. “That he, by the grace of God, should taste death for *every man*.”—Heb. ii. 9. “This is a faithful saying, and worthy of *all* acceptance, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save *sinners*.”—1 Tim. i. 15. “God so loved the *world*, that he gave his only begotten Son, that *whosoever* believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”—John, iii. 16. “For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world, through him, might be saved.”—17. “He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the *whole world*.”—1 John, ii. 2.

There are several other texts, besides these, which they produce as proofs of the same doctrine. He who wishes to see the arguments on this side of the question, will find a full statement of them in Dr. Whitby on the Five Points. But the controversy on this subject is not merely between the Calvinists and Arminians, but also between the Calvinists themselves. There always have been many Calvinists, who, on this question, have been of the same sentiments with the Arminians. Such are almost all the Calvinists, who are members of the Church of England, and many more besides them. Bishop Burnet, on the seventeenth article, observes, that "In England, the first reformers were generally in the Sublapsarian hypothesis; but Perkins and others asserted the Supralapsarian way." It is indisputable, however, that universal redemption forms one of the doctrines of the Church of England. In her communion service, the prayer of consecration, uses this language,—Christ, "by his own oblation of himself, once offered, made a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction, for the sins of the whole world." In the answer given to the question,—What dost thou chiefly learn in these articles of thy belief? the same doctrine is taught. Answer. "First, I learn to believe in God the Father, who hath made me, and all the world. Secondly, in God the Son, who hath redeemed me and all mankind. Thirdly, in God the Holy Ghost, who sanctifieth me, and all the elect people of God."

Mr. Scott, in a sermon, in which he states and defends the doctrines of election, and final perseverance, defends also the doctrine of general redemption. He observes in a note that "Peter scruples not to speak of those 'who deny the Lord that *bought them*, and bring upon them-

selves swift destruction; and Paul of 'destroying those for whom Christ died.' It might be expected that systematical expositors would find out other interpretations of all these testimonies, but the question is, Whether their interpretations are natural and obvious, and such as they would deem admissible in different circumstances?

"The idea of Christ paying *exactly so much for one*, and *so much for another*, and *so much for each*; and then adding the sums together, and forming a large *limited* sum, just sufficient to ransom the elect, appears unscriptural, and gives a degrading view of the glorious subject. An *all-sufficient* atonement was made at once, and an immeasurable fulness of mercy and grace is treasured up in Christ to be communicated, according to the eternal purpose and counsel of God. Every believer receives from this fulness: others remain under condemnation, not through defect of merit in Christ, but through their own impenitency and unbelief."

It is possible and even highly probable, that the sentiments of the seemingly opposite advocates for particular and for universal redemption, appear to be more discordant than they really are. The infinite, intrinsic merit, and the sufficiency of Christ's atonement for all men is not denied by those who contend for particular, and those who argue for universal redemption confess, that it will be effectual for the salvation only of those who believe and repent. Calvin himself, on Matthew xxvi. 28, observes, that the word *many* is put for *all mankind*. The same observation he makes on Heb. ix. 28. On Rom. v. 15, he observes, "It is certain that all do not derive advantage from the death of Christ, but the reason of this is their own unbelief." Again, on 1 John, ii. 2, "Christ suffered *sufficiently* for the whole world; but

efficaciously only for the elect." Sentiments of the same kind might be quoted from the works of President Edwards, who has been called the king of the Calvinists.

The third article is, that mankind are totally depraved in consequence of the fall ; and by virtue of Adam's being their public head, the guilt of his sin was imputed, and a corrupt nature conveyed to all his posterity, from which proceed all actual transgressions ; and that by sin we are made subject to death, and to all miseries, temporal, spiritual, and eternal. On this head there is no controversy between Calvin and Arminius, as we shall afterwards see ; but many who have sheltered their opinions, under the name of Arminius have taught, "That mankind are not totally depraved, and that depravity does not come upon them by virtue of Adam's being their public head ; but that mortality and natural evil only are the direct consequences of his sin to posterity."—"Those in the Low Countries, who at that time" (he is speaking of Grotius and his party) "went by the name of *Remonstrants* and Arminians, were indeed a great deal more."* This is the only way by which we can account for this article having become a ground of dispute in the Synod of Dort.

The fourth article relates to irresistible grace ; a term which we think scarcely any Calvinist now applies to the Divine influences of the holy Spirit. Nor does any Calvinist, so far as we know, ever suppose that God forces, though they all contend that he inclines the wills of men, by that grace which they term *efficacious*.

The fifth article is the doctrine of final perseverance.

* Dr. South's Sermon on Isaiah, lxxi, 8. Note.



AND CALVINISTS.

On this head Calvinists observe, that even upon the principles of the Arminians, there must be allowed to be, in some stage of the Christian's progress, confirming and establishing grace. Man, though created pure, fell in paradise; and, of the angels, some fell even in heaven. Without confirming and establishing grace, the state of saints in heaven must be exposed to continual hazard. In what state soever this blessing is communicated, it must be by Divine influence, as well as by Divine appointment. It is to these co-operating causes, they ascribe that perseverance which they believe the Scripture to represent, as following a regenerating faith in the Son of God. "In whom also, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of your inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possessions, unto the praise of his glory."—Eph. i. 13, 14.

The doctrine of the final perseverance of the Saints, the necessary consequence of absolute election, may be extremely hurtful to piety, if imperfectly stated; and therefore care ought to have been taken by those who hold the doctrine to guard it against abuse. Were a minister of the Gospel to teach, that the Perseverance of the Saints means only that those who had once been in a state of favour with God, shall always continue in that state, it is obvious that his representation of the doctrine is so defective, that to a wicked man; who had taken up an enthusiastic conceit that he had once been in a state of reconciliation with God, it might prove the occasion of the most mischievous delusion. Mr. Hume, in his History of England, has preserved a story of this kind of Oliver Cromwell, who, on his death bed, deceived himself; and if the anecdote be correct, was deceived in

this manner. "He asked Goodwin, one of his preachers, 'if the doctrine was true, that the elect could never fall, or suffer a final reprobation?' Nothing more certain, replied the preacher. 'Then am I safe,' said the Protector, 'for I am sure that once I was in a state of grace.'"

—But let the doctrine be fully stated, that perseverance in the favour of God can never be separated from perseverance in his image, in holiness of heart and life, and even those who do not subscribe to the doctrine of final perseverance, must allow it to be perfectly harmless.

From the review we have taken of the Calvinistic controversy, two things appear to be evident. The first is, that the grounds of dispute are now considerably altered, and that almost the whole subjects of controversy between Calvinists and Arminians are reduced to absolute election, and final perseverance. The second is, that Calvinists differ greatly among themselves. Some still consider preterition, if not reprobation, as a necessary part of the system, while others consider both of them as spots and stains upon the doctrine of absolute decrees. Some Calvinists consider the fall of man as the subject of a Divine decree. Others entirely disapprove of such a sentiment, and think it inconsistent with the honour of the Divine perfections. Some contend for particular, and others for universal redemption. According as they take higher or lower ground on these subjects, they are called high, or low Calvinists.

Dr. Marsh, in his reply to Dr. Milner's *Strictures*, has taken some pains to show, that in Calvinism there can be no degrees. "On the subject of Predestination therefore we can have no such thing as half a Calvinist, or a *moderate* Calvinist. If a man agrees with Calvin on that point he is *altogether* a Calvinist, on that point. If he

does not agree with Calvin on that point, he is not at all a Calvinist on that point."—p. 84. It certainly does not require great penetration to perceive, that on any point a man is a Calvinist just so far as on that subject he agrees with Calvin; and that so far as he differs from Calvin, he is on that point no Calvinist. But this able writer does not appear to have attended to the origin of these anomalous forms of expression, a high, or a moderate Calvinist. It has long been the practice of those who oppose the doctrine of absolute election, to give the name of Calvinists to all who embrace that tenet, whether they embrace or do not embrace the whole system of Calvin. Very few of the Clergy of the Church of England, who believe in the doctrine of absolute election, carry that point nearly so high as Calvin does, in his Institutes, and therefore they do not adopt the name of Calvinists, being conscious that though they adopt a part, they disapprove of some other parts of the system of that divine. Even a glance at Mr. Scott's remarks might have satisfied Dr. Marsh, that they for whom Mr. Scott apologizes, neither assume that name, nor wish to have it imposed on them. But, in defiance of their remonstrances, their antagonists call them Calvinists. Dr. Marsh cannot be ignorant that many who have believed in the doctrine of absolute election, have entirely disbelieved the doctrine of reprobation, and also of preterition, and rejected particular, believing in universal redemption. On the latter subject he must allow them to have been Anticalvinists, though on the subject of absolute election, they were Calvinists. The absurdity of fixing the name of Calvinists on all who believe in absolute decrees, they think does not belong to those who do not assume, but to those who impose the name. Some persons, however, as appears by the quo-

tation from Dr. Williams, glory in the name, and whether they have a right to it or not, they have no reason to complain of hardship in the imposition of it.

Too many, both Calvinists and Arminians, in contending for their opposite systems, have taken a latitude of expression highly indecorous and irreverent, by arguing as if the dignity and glory of the Divine attributes and government, must stand or fall with their opposite conclusions. The remonstrances of that pious and excellent man, Mr. Scott, on this subject, it is to be hoped, will be attended to by those who adopt his sentiments, and not despised by those who have come to a different conclusion, on the subject of the decrees. "It is greatly to be wished, that they who engage in religious controversy, would reverently avoid all language, that even seems to impeach the conduct of God, on the supposition that their own tenets are not true. Are we so completely infallible, that we should speak a word implying, that if we be mistaken, God is? On this unhappy subject, no tongue can express the irreverence, nay the blasphemy which has been uttered by eager disputers. I am conscious, that I have no need or inclination to adopt any argument of this kind: but should I drop one word, implying, by fair construction, such a connexion between my sentiments and the honour of the Divine perfections: that, if the former are erroneous, this is exposed to impeachment, or even doubt; I will promise before God, publicly, with shame to retract it, when pointed out to me. Whether Calvinism be true or false, God is infinitely wise, righteous, holy, faithful, good, merciful; worthy of all reverence, adoration, love, confidence, honour, and obedience, from all rational creatures, to all eternity. It would, indeed, be a blessed effect of this publication, if

it should render Calvinists, as well as their opponents, more reverently cautious, what words they use, in the warmth of controversy, when, on any account, the glory of God, in his dispensations or decrees, is even remotely concerned. 'Let God be true and every man a liar.' "*

Dr. Kipling, Mr. Fellows, and several other writers, have charged Calvinism with impiety, and with having a tendency to promote immorality, in direct opposition, not only to the testimonies of its candid, but also of some of its violent enemies, as well as to all the evidence of stubborn facts. Even Dr. Priestley confesses that Calvinism was favourable to piety. The Monthly Reviewers observe, "It is but justice to this sect to remark, that its members are in general exemplary for their piety and virtue."† Bishop Burnet, a man of true piety, though an Arminian, in his exposition of the seventeenth Article of the Church of England, speaks of Calvinists in the most respectful terms. "A Calvinist is taught by his opinions, to think meanly of himself, and to ascribe the honour of all to God; which lays in him a deep foundation for humility: he is also much inclined to secret prayer, and to a fixed dependence on God; which naturally both brings his mind to a good state, and fixes it in it. And so though perhaps he cannot give a coherent account of the grounds of his watchfulness and care of himself, yet that temper arises out of his humility and his earnestness in prayer." The man whom he celebrates, as having possessed the noblest sense of Divine things that he ever found in a human breast,

* Remarks on the Refutation of Calvinism, by Bishop Tomline, Vol. II, p. p. 181, 182.

† Monthly Review for March, 1806, p. 314.

was Archbishop Leighton, and every person who is acquainted with his writings knows, that in sentiment he was decidedly a Calvinist. We have often heard pious members of the Church of England, who were Arminians, complain, that those forms of prayer that in later times have been composed for its occasional services, had much less of that unction and holy fire, which are so refreshing and warming to pious minds, in the old liturgy of the Church. It is well known that the liturgy was composed by men who were moderate Calvinists.

With respect to the charge that Calvinism is destructive to morality, it is an argument against facts, and the only thing that those who bring it can say, is, that if its tendency be not immoral, it ought to be so. There is no country in Europe, wherein punishments are so seldom inflicted by the Magistrates, as in Scotland, because there is none in which the tone of morals is so high, and general information and good manners so widely diffused. But, upon the maxims of these gentlemen, we should expect to find it the nursery of the most flagitious crimes, and the cage of every unclean and hateful bird. There is no country where Calvinistic principles are so general, so popular, or carried to so high a pitch.

Bishop Horsley, in his Primary Charge to the Clergy of the Diocese of St. Asaph, though decidedly an Arminian, speaks of Calvin and Calvinists in respectful terms. —“If ever you should be provoked to take a part in these disputes, of all things, I entreat you to avoid what is now become very common, acrimonious abuse of Calvinism and of Calvin. Remember, I beseech you, that some tenderness is due to the errors and extravagances of a man, eminent as he was in his day, for his piety, his wisdom, and his learning; and to whom the Reformation

in its beginning is so much indebted. At least take especial care, before you aim your shaft at Calvinism, that you know what is Calvinism, and what is not ; that in that mass of doctrine, which it is of late become the fashion to abuse under the name of Calvinism, you can distinguish with certainty between that part of it which is nothing better than Calvinism, and that which belongs to our common Christianity, and the general faith of the Reformed Churches ; lest, when you mean only to fall foul of Calvinism, you should unwarily attack something more sacred and of a higher origin. I must say that I have found a great want of discrimination, in some late controversial writings, on the side of the Church, as they were meant to be against the Methodists ; the authors of which have acquired much applause and reputation, but with so little real knowledge of their subject, that give me the principles upon which these writers argue, and I will undertake to convict, I will not say Arminians only and Archbishop Laud, but upon these principles I will undertake to convict the fathers of the Council of Trent, of Calvinism. So closely is a great part of that which is most ignorantly called Calvinism interwoven with the very rudiments of Christianity. Better were it for the Church if such apologists would withhold their services."

To suppose that Calvinists must necessarily be persons of weak intellects, and destitute of learning and philosophical talent, though it is a supposition that has often been made, is one that betrays a strange excess either of ignorance or of prejudice. Among them we find the second man and writer, whose abilities adorned this island, or perhaps the globe which we inhabit. Among them we find the names of Lord Bacon, Hooker, Sir M. Hale,

Cranmer, Hooper, Jewel, Ridley, Hall, South, Beveridge, Owen, Baxter, Watts, Doddridge, Witherspoon, Edwards, Erskine, Cowper, &c. &c. &c. All of them were men of no mean powers, and some of them writers of the first rate that this, or any other country has produced. Nor have the walks of Calvinism been less distinguished for exemplary goodness, and the most diffusive charity, than for literary eminence. Few in modern times will bear a comparison, in whatsoever things are pure, in whatsoever things are lovely, in whatsoever things are of good report, with John Thornton, with John Howard, or with David Dale, and many other names that might be mentioned; and the history of the world, since the age of the Apostles, cannot furnish us with any whose virtues shone with a brighter light, or whose influences were attended with more healthful rays.

Though it is utterly inconsistent with our present plan, to enter further into the merits of the Calvinistic controversy, justice requires that when we treat of systems of religion and their adherents, we should endeavour to wipe away the unjust aspersions which have been cast upon them. Let the controversy between Calvinists and Arminians be decided, not by an appeal to our own reasonings on this high subject, to determine what is the most fit and consistent system; an appeal too often made by both parties; but by a patient and impartial examination of the doctrines of Revelation, and an humble submission to its decisions. There may be reason to suppose, from the imperfection of our knowledge, and the general fondness of men for system, that the questions on divinity are not many, in which there is nothing but truth on the one side, and nothing but error on the other.

OF ARMINIANISM AND ARMINIANS.

THOSE who assume the name of Arminians, are perhaps by much the most numerous body of Protestants, both in England and in most other parts of Europe ; but it is comparatively a small part of that body who closely adhere to all the doctrines believed and taught by Arminius. His sentiments have been shamefully misrepresented by some Calvinists, and even by many who professed to range themselves under his standard. Scotch Calvinists, forming their sentiments of Arminianism, rather from the writings of those in their own country who adopted some of his tenets, than from a complete investigation of the works of Arminius, have often committed themselves on this subject. English Calvinists have likewise repeatedly fallen into the same mistake. The former are certainly something more excusable than the latter. The number of pious men who have adopted and defended the Arminian hypothesis in Scotland, has been comparatively small. Almost all its strenuous and open defenders, though they agreed with Arminius in opposing the doctrines of absolute election, agreed with him in nothing besides. Mr. Simson and Mr. Campbell, and many others who have been called Arminians, were nearly as much opposed, (the article of absolute decrees being excepted) to the sentiments of Arminius, as they were to those of Calvin. In England, there has long been a succession of men who, though not Calvinists, have been strenu-

ous defenders of Evangelical doctrines; who believe man to be wholly corrupted by the fall; who believe in the doctrine of justification by faith in the blood of Christ, and in sanctification by his Spirit; and, as these carefully distinguish their tenets from the Pelagian and Semi-Pelagian heresies, those who have confounded them with such heretics, have been very defective either in attention or in candour. In extenuation of this error it may be justly pleaded, that some of those who have pretended to give an impartial statement of Arminianism, have given one utterly false and unjust. We must then have recourse to the writings of Arminius himself, and learn his creed from his own works. It would be of no general use to give his sentiments in a language, known only to the learned; and as we wish that nothing in a case so important should rest upon our judgment, we shall quote from a periodical publication of high respectability, the Editors of which take no part in the debate between Calvinists and Arminians, what is sufficient for our purpose. Let us first attend to his sentiments with respect to Original Sin, the source of that corruption which has universally spread itself over our diseased nature.

“The immediate and proper effect of Adam’s sin was the displeasure of God. For since sin is the transgression of the law, it first and immediately offends the Legislator, who conceives just wrath, which is the second effect of sin. From wrath follows the infliction of punishment, which is here twofold,—First, the guilt of death, bodily and spiritual. Second, the privation of holiness and original righteousness, which being the effect of the Holy Ghost dwelling in man, ought not to remain in him who had fallen from the favour of God, and incur-

red his wrath; for that Spirit is the sign of the favour and good will of God.

“ But this sin is not peculiar to the first of mankind, but common to the whole race, and to all their descendants, who at that time when they sinned were in their loins, and afterwards by the natural mode of propagation, descended from them, according to the primeval blessing. For all sinned in Adam. Whatsoever punishment therefore is brought upon the first parents, pervades and presses the whole posterity, so that all by nature are sons of wrath, guilty of condemnation and of death, both temporal and *eternal*, finally destitute of the original righteousness and holiness, with which evils they will continue oppressed to eternity, unless they are delivered from them by Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever.”—Arminius’s Public Disputations. Thesis vii.

“ As to the grace of God,” observes this divine, “ I believe that it is—First, The gratuitous affection by which God is well disposed towards the miserable sinner: according to which, he gives in the first place the Son, that whosoever believeth in him may have eternal life. Then, in and for Jesus Christ, justifies him and admits him into the right of a son for salvation. Secondly, that it (grace) is an infusion of all the gifts of the Holy Spirit, both in the understanding, and in the will and affections which belong to his *regeneration* and renovation, such as faith, hope, charity, and that without these gifts man is not fit to think, will, or do any good thing. Thirdly, That it (grace) is the continual assistance of the Holy Ghost, by which the Holy Spirit urges and excites to good, the man after he is born again, by pouring into him wholesome thoughts, and inspiring good desires, that so he may actually will that which is good: by which moreover

He may from that time, will and operate together with man, so that man may accomplish that which God wills. And this mode I ascribe to grace—the beginning, continuance, and completion of all good, insomuch that after a man is regenerated, without this preventing, co-operating, and exciting grace, he can neither think, will, nor do any thing that is good, nor resist any temptation to evil.

“Hence, it appears that I do no injury to grace, and am not, as I am reported, one who attributed too much to the free-will of man, for the whole controversy turns upon this, whether the grace of God is an irresistible force. That is, the controversy is not about the actions, or operations, which may be ascribed to grace, of which I confess and inculcate as many as any other person, but concerning the mode of operation, whether it be irresistible. For as to this, I believe according to the Scriptures, *that many resist the Holy Spirit, and repel offered grace.*

“Again, a question is moved concerning the words, *faith is imputed for righteousness*, (Rom. iv.) whether they are to be understood *properly*, as if faith itself, as an act performed according to the command of the Gospel, be imputed before God, to or for righteousness, and that of grace, since it is not the very righteousness of the law; or whether they should be so understood, that the righteousness of Christ, apprehended by faith, is imputed to us for righteousness, figuratively and *improperly*; or whether that the righteousness, to or for which faith is imputed, be the instrumental work of faith, as some assert. I have followed the first opinion, in the thesis disputed under me, concerning Justification. For this cause I am said to teach wrong concerning man’s justification before

God. This may be cleared up at a proper season. At present I briefly say, that I believe that sinners are made righteous through the *sole* obedience of Jesus Christ, and that the righteousness of Christ is the only meritorious cause, for which God forgives sin to believers, and counts them for righteous, no otherwise than if they had perfectly fulfilled the law. But since God imputes the righteousness of Christ to none but believers, in this sense I affirm it to be well and properly said, that faith is imputed to the believer for righteousness through grace: since God hath offered his Son Jesus Christ to be the tribunal of grace, or the propitiation through faith in his blood. But, however, my opinion is the same as that of Calvin, to whose third book of the Institutes, on this subject, I am ready to subscribe."—Declaration of Arminius.*

Now, when we have heard Arminius state his own belief, let us hear how it is stated for him, by Mr. Evans, in his Sketch. Having observed that the tenets of Arminius include five propositions, he gives this as the third, "That mankind are not totally depraved, and that depravity does not come upon them by virtue of Adam's being their public head; but that mortality and natural evil only are the direct consequences of his sin to posterity." Several Calvinists have given representations of Arminius's doctrine on this head, equally false and distorted. Had Mr. Evans acted with the fairness and impartiality that Mr. Adams has displayed,† by giving the article as maintained by this divine, and then adding that which has been substituted in its place, by Dr. Gregory, and others, who take the name of Arminians, it must have been apparent to all how

* Christian Observer for March, 1807. † Religious World Displayed, Vol. II, p. 252. Note.

far the disciples have departed from the sentiments of their pretended master. The consequences of these misrepresentations are, that the disputants on both sides are often led into Quixotical adventures, and, when they cannot find a giant, they engage with a windmill.

It is evident from the review of the creed of Arminius, that he believed man to be so corrupted by the fall, that without the Holy Spirit of God preventing him, co-operating with him, and inclining him, he is not fit to think, to will, or to do any good thing. Who, after such a declaration, can affirm that Arminius denied either the doctrine of original sin, or that of regeneration by the Holy Spirit of God; or, lastly, that of justification through grace, by faith in the imputed righteousness of Christ? With respect to the dispute about the freedom of the will, there is reason to suppose that it arises principally from the ambiguity of language, and is continued because the disputants misunderstand one another. Arminians are often by Calvinists (we mean the more illiberal part of them,) called Free-willers, and this name is not given them out of respect. But do not Calvinists maintain the freedom of the will, and the free agency of man as absolutely necessary to his being the subject of moral government? Calvinists sometimes assert that man, as a sinner, has no freedom of will to do good. Arminians affirm that man has freedom of will to good, and then, like men in the dark, they fall to blows, and after many are given and received on both sides, if they come to mutual explanations, they find the dispute to be, as Horace says, *De lana caprina* about words, and that both their affirmations are equally just, though in different respects. To the Calvinist's affirmation, that man as a sinner has no freedom of will to good, the Arminian supposing him to mean

that the will of man is controlled by external force, from choosing good, justly enough encounters this declaration with another, and affirms that the will of man, though fallen, is as free to good as the will of Adam, in the state innocence. But let the Calvinist declare that which probably was all he meant to declare, that the will of man as a sinner, never chooses what is good, till it is purified by Divine grace, both agree in the statement; for both agree that the bias to evil is wholly in the depravity of man's nature.

We may observe that the doctrine of a double justification, one by faith now, being forgiven our sins upon our profession of Christianity, and another, being justified before God by our works at the last day, was equally unknown to Arminius, and to Calvin. Both of them consider justification as one act, by which the sinner is pardoned and accepted, through faith in the redemption, that is Jesus Christ. Nor does Arminius represent justification to be by faith, as the aggregate of all Christian virtues; as many persons have done who take the name of Arminians. This doctrine is very justly reprobated by Mr. John Wesley, a genuine disciple of that celebrated theologian.—“I went to church at ten, and heard a remarkable discourse, asserting ‘that we are justified by faith alone; but that this faith, which is the previous condition of justification, is the complex of all Christian virtues, including all holiness and good works, in the very idea of it.’

“Alas! How little is the difference between asserting, either, First,—That we are justified by works, which is Popery bare-faced, (and indeed so gross that the sober Papists, those of the council of Trent in particular, are ashamed of it); or Second,—That we are justified by faith

and works ; which is Popery refined or veiled ; (but with so thin a veil, that every attentive observer, must discern it is the same still) ; or Third,—That we are justified by faith alone, but by such a faith as includes all good works. What a poor shift is this ? ‘ I will not say, we are justified by works ; nor yet by faith and works : because I have subscribed articles and homilies which maintain just the contrary. No, I say we are justified by faith alone.—But then, by faith, I mean works ! ’ ”*

Upon the whole it is evident that on the subjects of original sin and justification, the real followers of Arminius and of Calvin are in perfect harmony. That, upon the doctrines of grace or the influences of the Holy Spirit of God, they are both agreed in the necessity of this grace to prevent men, that they may have a good will, and to work with them when they have that good will. Both of them therefore believe in the doctrine of regeneration, and that Christians are born not of the will of man, but of God. It is evident that while you keep absolute election out of the view of both, there seems scarcely to be a perceptible line of distinction. Their faith is the same, their experience is the same, and both ascribe to free grace the rise, the progress, and the final perfection of the souls of men in holiness. But, if the doctrines of absolute election and the final perseverance of the saints be introduced, the line of distinction appears to be plainly marked, and they retire from one another on the different sides of it, though slowly, yet so effectually that they are soon at a considerable remove. The Calvinist presses the Arminian with the consequence of the

* Journal, Vol. xxvii, p: 81.

doctrine he has admitted, and tells him that in acknowledging the work begun by the grace of God, which sought the sinner when he was not inquiring after God, he has admitted in substance the doctrine of election, though he is offended at the word which expresses it. Here the controversy begins to be extremely subtle, till both parties lose, perhaps, not only their tempers, but themselves, in metaphysical labyrinths and mazes. The Arminian in his turn presses the Calvinist with the consequences of absolute decrees, till both of them forgetting a maxim which should always be present before the eyes of disputants who contend, for the truth and not for victory, "To use *strong arguments* and *moderate language*," have recourse to strong, and sometimes even violent language, and weak arguments; and provoke one another to every thing but love. The Calvinist charges it as the consequence of his opponent's denying absolute election, that he rejects the Divine Sovereignty, and the Arminian, in his turn charges the Calvinist with destroying human liberty. "The common fault of both sides," says Bishop Burnet, (Expos. of the 17th Article,) "is to charge one another with the consequences of their opinions, as if they were truly their tenets. Whereas they are apprehensive enough of these consequences: they have no mind to them, and they fancy that by a few distinctions they can avoid them. But each thinks the consequences of the other are both worse, and more certainly fastened to that doctrine, than the consequences that are urged against himself are. And so they think they must choose that opinion that is the least perplexed and difficult; not but that ingenuous and learned men of all sides confess, that they feel themselves very often pinched in these matters."

That mutual irritation of spirit, which is the consequence

of protracted debate, removes the Calvinist and Arminian further from each other, than they probably would be inclined to go, were they strictly watchful of their rising tempers and fretted minds, and each of them thinks himself the advocate of truth, when perhaps he is only the guardian of his own importance. The arrogance of superiority in one of the parties is extremely repulsive to the other, and if each thinks he sees it in his antagonist, the distance will widen every hour. A spirit of conciliation and gentleness is of much importance to the attainment of unity in the faith; and charity is the most powerful attraction to bring men to be of one mind, and the most effectual bond to keep them in it. This is particularly exemplified in the early part of that controversy which Mr. Westley had with Mr. Whitefield about the doctrines of Calvinism. We shall, from the Journal of the former, give the following extract: "Having found for some time a strong desire to unite with Mr. Whitefield, as far as possible to cut off needless dispute, I wrote down my sentiments, as plain as I could, in the following terms: There are three points in debate, First, Unconditional election. Second, Irresistible grace. Third, Final perseverance.

"With regard to the first, unconditional election,—I believe, that God before the foundation of the world *did unconditionally* elect certain persons to do certain works, as Paul to preach the Gospel: that he has *unconditionally elected* some nations to receive peculiar privileges, the Jewish nation in particular: that he has *unconditionally elected* some nations to hear the Gospel, as England and Scotland now, and many others in past ages: that he has *unconditionally elected* some persons, to many peculiar advantages, both with regard to temporal and spiritual

things: And I do not deny (though I cannot prove it is so) that he has *unconditionally elected* some persons to eternal glory. But I cannot believe, that all those who are *not* thus *elected* to glory must perish everlastingly; or that there is one soul on earth, who has not ever had *a possibility* of escaping eternal damnation.

“ With regard to the second, irresistible grace,—I believe that the grace which brings faith, and thereby salvation into the soul, is irresistible *at that moment*: that most believers may remember some time when God did *irresistibly* convince them of sin: that most believers do at some other times find God irresistibly acting upon their souls: yet I believe, that the grace of God both before and after those moments, may be and hath been resisted: and that, in general it does not act *irresistibly*, but we *may* comply therewith or *may not*. And I do not deny, that in some souls the grace of God is so far *irresistible*, that they cannot but believe and be finally saved. But I cannot believe, that all those *must* be damned, in whom it does not *thus irresistibly* work: or that there is one soul on earth, who has not, and never had any other grace, than such as does in fact increase his damnation, and was designed of God so to do.

“ With regard to the third, final perseverance,—I incline to believe, that there is a state attainable in this life, from which a man cannot finally fall: and that he has attained this, who can say, ‘*old things are past away; all things in me are become new.*’ ”*

Mr. Wesley was at this time almost a moderate Calvinist. He did not altogether deny unconditional e-

* Journal, Vol. xviii, p. p. 157, 158, 159.

lection. Irresistible grace he in some instances acknowledged, and the doctrine of final perseverance he was inclined to believe with respect to certain persons.—It is worthy of our remark, because it tends to show that Evangelical Calvinists and Evangelical Arminians approximate nearer to each other than they suppose, that in one point they meet “That the destruction of those who perish in their sins, is wholly of themselves; and the salvation of all who are saved, wholly of God.” Mr. Simeon, a very respectable moderate Calvinist, in the preface to his *Five Hundred Skeletons of Sermons*, relates, in a note, a very pleasing anecdote, which we shall here give the reader.

“A young Minister, about three or four years after he was ordained, had an opportunity of conversing familiarly with the great and venerable leader of the Arminians in this kingdom; and wishing to improve the occasion to the uttermost, he addressed him nearly in the following words: ‘Sir, I understand that you are called an Arminian; and I have sometimes been called a Calvinist; and therefore I suppose we are to draw daggers. But before I consent to begin the combat, with your permission, I will ask you a few questions, not from impertinent curiosity, but for real instruction.’ Permission being very readily and kindly granted, the young Minister proceeded to ask, ‘Pray, Sir, do you feel yourself a depraved creature, so depraved, that you would never have thought of turning unto God, if God had not first put it into your heart?’ ‘Yes,’ says the veteran, ‘I do, indeed.’ ‘And do you utterly despair of recommending yourself to God by any thing that you can do; and look for salvation solely through the blood and righteousness of Christ?’ —‘Yes, solely through Christ.’—‘But, Sir, supposing

you were at first saved by Christ, are you not, somehow or other, to save yourself afterwards by your own works?'—'No, I must be saved by Christ from first to last.'—'Allowing then that you were first turned by the grace of God, are you not, in some way or other, to keep yourself by your own power?'—'No.'—'What then are you to be upheld every hour and every moment by God, as much as an infant in its mother's arms?'—'Yes, altogether.'—'And is all your hope in the grace and mercy of God, to preserve you unto his heavenly kingdom?'—'Yes; I have no hope but in him.'—'Then, Sir, with your leave, I will put up my dagger again; for this is all my Calvinism; this is my election, my justification by faith, my final perseverance: it is, in substance, all that I hold, and as I hold it; and therefore, if you please, instead of searching out terms and phrases, to be a ground of contention between us, we will cordially unite in those things wherein we agree.'

"The Arminian leader (Mr. Wesley) was so pleased," says Mr. Simeon, "with the conversation, that he made particular mention of it in his journals; and notwithstanding there never afterwards was any connexion between the parties, he retained an unfeigned regard for his young inquirer to the hour of his death."

There was a time when, even among pious men, and men of evangelical sentiments the dispute about absolute and conditional decrees seemed to engross almost the whole attention of those who had engaged in the controversy; and when it was in vain, not only to expect any compromise between the parties, but even any co-operation in promoting the general interests of religion. It must give pleasure to every good man to know, that when unity of sentiment is not perfect, even there unity

of heart and affection may be found to exist in a high state of perfection. Mr. Scott, speaking of the mutual intercourse, which subsists between the Moderate Calvinists and the Evangelical Arminian Clergy of the Church of England, gives the following pleasing account. "It would really surprise those, who imagine that our chief earnestness is about the high points of Calvinism, to be present *incog.* in the company of a select number of the evangelical clergy; who are aware, that on this doctrine of personal election and final perseverance, they differ from each other; to observe, that in a conversation, wholly on some select religious subject, intimately connected as they suppose, with their ministerial usefulness, and continued during two or three hours; these subjects are never once mentioned, and often not hinted at. Nay, I verily believe, that in the earnestness of the inquiry how they may best make progress in personal religion, and in doing good to their congregations, they scarcely occur to the thought of any present. If, however, any thing be brought forward respecting them, it generally passes off by some one saying 'We know each others' sentiments on that point; and we agree to differ amicably: dismiss the subject.' Thus we often meet and converse, and pray together; and part, more cordially united than before; even though we must think each other mistaken on this point. But we are agreed in so many other matters of prime and essential importance; that unless we are called on to deliver our sentiments on these doctrines, we seldom mention them."*

In the year 1618, was held the famous synod of Dort. Of this synod three divines of the Church of England

* Remarks, Vol. II, p. p. 464, 465.

were members, of whom the celebrated Hall, afterwards Bishop of Norwich, was one. By this synod the opinions of the Arminians were condemned, and themselves excommunicated. Two political factions at that time existing in Holland, the Arminians united themselves to the one, and the Calvinists to the other. Religious zeal gave an edge to political animosity. The intrigues of Barnevelt, Grotius, and the Arminian party, being defeated by the superior address of Maurice, to whom the Calvinists had joined themselves, the latter exercised a severe and unrelenting tyranny over the former. Barnevelt lost his head, and Grotius was condemned to perpetual imprisonment. He escaped from his prison and took refuge in France. When opposite sentiments in religion are blended with political feuds, animosities the most inveterate and fierce may be expected to tear society in pieces. The same union of religion with politics, in the time of Charles the First, produced in this country the persecution of the country and puritan party; and when that party had become triumphant, they adopted the same measures of rigour and injustice towards the monarchical and church party, which they had suffered from them. The Arminians are called the Remonstrants, from a Remonstrance they presented to the States General, in which they stated their grievances, and petitioned for redress.

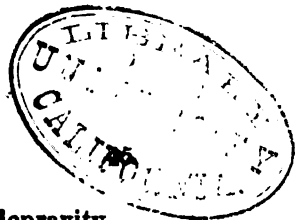
Among the most eminent divines of the Arminian system in this country, may be ranked Latimer, Tillotson, Burnet, Secker, Sherlock, Wilson, Lowth, Horsley, Porteus, &c. &c. &c. Many of this school have been distinguished equally by their piety and their learning; by the cultivation of every Divine and of every human virtue. The Methodists, lately in connexion with Mr.

Wesley are, almost universally Arminians, and their Arminianism is generally more pure than that of many others who take the name. Many writers who are commonly called Arminians, possess very inadequate opinions of original sin, or at least express themselves in a very inaccurate manner on this subject; and with respect to Evangelical religion, fall far short of Arminius himself.

Arminians should be carefully distinguished from Pelagians, and Semi-Pelagians, with whom Calvinists have often very unjustly classed them. Pelagius was a native of Britain, who began to propagate his principles at Rome, in the beginning of the fifth century. He taught that all men come into the world as pure as Adam; that our original sin is nothing but our imitation of Adam's transgression; that man stands in no need of Divine influences; but has in himself sufficient powers for his sanctification; that infants need no remission of sins; and that our good works merit eternal happiness. These doctrines are evidently subversive of the Gospel. His system was a little modified by Cassian, a monk who taught that the first conversion of the soul to God was merely the effect of its own free choice, and who consequently denied preventing grace. Those who adopted his opinion were called Semi-Pelagians. They admitted indeed the necessity of supernatural aids, after men had turned to God, to carry them on to perfection.

"Nothing but mere prejudice," says a respectable writer, "or the grossest ignorance, can lead any to confound it," (the Arminian doctrine) "with that of Socinus, or even with that of Pelagius; and of course to associate its professors with Pelagians and Socinians, as is not unfrequently done by many Calvinists and others, from whom better things might be expected. For this sys-

AND ARMINIANS.



tem, which maintains the doctrine of human depravity—salvation by Christ—justification by faith, and sanctification by the Holy Spirit, stands on very different grounds from that of either the Pelagians or Semi-Pelagians. It may, notwithstanding, be admitted that there have not been wanting some who have sheltered their Pelagian, nor others perhaps even their Socinian, errors, under the name of Arminianism.”*

Both Calvinists and Arminians stand exposed to dangers peculiar to themselves. The Minister of Christianity who adopts, what is called the Calvinistic system, will do well to take care that while he preaches the doctrines of grace, he do not throw into the shade the practical duties of the Christian life, and that he guard his hearers against every approach to Antinomianism. Antinomianism is the *dead sea* of religion, where every thing is either indurated or putrified. In these waters the celebrated Prynne must have been dipped, before he could declare in his Perpetuity “ Let any true saint of God be taken away in the very act of any known sin, before it is possible for him to repent, I make no doubt or scruple of it, but he shall as surely be saved, as if he had lived to have repented of it.” This sentiment, which Archbishop Laud so justly reprobated, and which Dr. Marsh, in his Strictures so justly censures, is utterly inconsistent with the sound doctrine that cannot be reprovcd.—The Arminian Preacher has need to take care, that he not only believe the doctrines of grace, but that he also in the public instruction he communicates, give them that prominence which is necessary to the faithful discharge of his duty.

* Mr. Adams's Religious World Displayed, Vol. II, p. p. 254, 255.

as a good steward of the mysteries of the Gospel, as well as of its pure morality: that the morality which he inculcates, rise infinitely above that which any system of heathen philosophy knew; not the cold and calculating morality of general expediency, but that which flows from vital religion, the love of God shed abroad in the heart, by the influence of the Holy Ghost.

It is strange that Mr. Evans should have represented Episcopius and Grotius as Arminian writers. The latter certainly was so in the first part of his life, and in his early productions; but his writings before his death, were of a very different kind. Both these writers were of the political party to which this name was affixed, but both of them were Pelagians, if not Unitarians. They agreed indeed with Arminius in some points, as they did with Calvin in others; but with respect to original sin, justification by grace, and the necessity of Divine influence they differed from Arminius completely. Dr. Taylor's Key to the Epistle to the Romans, Mr. Evans says, has been much admired on the subject of Arminianism. We wish he had informed us by whom it has been admired. Mr. Belsham and other Unitarian writers have certainly approved and admired it, as its tendency is to set aside the most important doctrines of the Gospel. But every follower of Arminius, though he may meet with some things that accord with his own sentiments, will think of it in general, just as every Calvinist thinks, that it is subversive of the peculiar truths of Christianity, and utterly irreconcilable to common honesty, because its design is not avowed, but covered by the pretence of explaining, what it means to destroy. Mr. Fellows too, is made by Mr. Evans to take his place among the Arminians, and by the side of Mr. Wesley. Had the pious father of the

Methodists been alive, he certainly would have thought himself in strange company, and begged permission to retire from such society, to some more congenial to his sentiments. I believe he would much sooner have taken a chair by the side of Calvin himself. If Calvinists and Arminians differ, the difference is between those who either are, or may be the disciples of the blessed Redeemer. But those who oppose the doctrines of Grace neither are, nor can be considered by either of them as persons who build upon the same foundation with themselves. Mr. Fellows differs from the general body of Socinians in admitting the immortality of the soul, though he seems scarcely to believe in the doctrine of the resurrection. Dr. Taylor believed in the personality of the Holy Ghost, but in other respects the difference between him and the Unitarians is extremely small. Were we to recommend the writings of a divine of the Church of England, or of the Church of Scotland, as a fair specimen of the sentiments of the society of the Friends, we should do exactly what Mr. Evans has done, when he refers to the writings of such men for an account of Arminianism. Misrepresentations of this kind are attended with the very worst effects. They are so many traps set to catch the simple, and those who are off their guard, of whom there are too many in all societies. To prevent this, we have no doubt was Mr. Benson's intention in cautioning the Methodists to beware of being led astray by the Sketch, which warning has given so great offence to Mr. Evans as to disturb the ordinary tranquillity of his mind. The Editors of a periodical work, conducted with considerable abilities, have fallen into so gross a mistake, though of a different kind, as to call Hooker, whose sentiments were decidedly Calvinistic, an Arminian.—Writers of

the Semi-Pelagian school have been numerous, such were Archbishop Newcombe, Bishops Bull, Warburton, &c. &c. &c.



ON EVANGELICAL RELIGION.

THOSE are called Evangelical Ministers and writers, who consider the state of man as that of a fallen and guilty creature; the atonement made by the obedience and sacrifice of the Son of God, and the consequence of it, justification through faith in his blood; regeneration by the spirit and grace of Christ, as fundamental truths of Christianity, and who give them in their sermons or writings that prominence, which they appear to them to hold in the Gospel of reconciliation. They do not consider the practical and relative duties of Christianity as things of less importance than the truths we have mentioned, but admit both of them to be equal in their proper places. In repentance toward God, and in faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ, they lay the foundation of their system, and on this foundation they teach men to build themselves up in their most holy faith, adding to it every virtue, being steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the way and work of the Lord. No men more decidedly enforce the practice of good works, and the absolute necessity of them, not only to salvation, but as an eminent and essential part of it. They are careful, however, to distinguish good from dead works, vital religion from mere decency, and the obedience which springs from a lively faith, working by

love to God and to man, from that which knows no higher motive than self love. Of their system Christ is the sun, not a mere satellite revolving around orbs, and appended to them for some secondary purpose, but the day-spring from on high, the fountain of light, life, and joy. It is in his rising with healing under his wings, that they expect the shadow of death to be turned into the morning, the wilderness and the solitary place to become glad, and the desert to blossom as the rose. To the grace which He is exalted as a prince and a saviour to bestow, they look for those powerful energies which raise men from the death of sin, to sit with their Saviour in heavenly places, and to abound in the works of righteousness, which are by him to the glory of God. Of their morality, the supreme love of God is the radical principle, which, being shed abroad in the hearts of men by the Holy Ghost, kindles a spirit of devotion to God that is fervent; and to men, a charity that burns with a constant flame.

Of Evangelical preaching, the effects have been as conspicuous and incontrovertible, as they have been important and salutary. That they are far from being universal must be acknowledged; for the Gospel, like all other medicines, can operate a cure only when it is received. The ministers of Christianity, like their Divine Master, have generally had to complain "Lord who hath believed our report? and to whom has the arm of Jehovah been revealed?" The numbers of those who have derived the highest blessings from Evangelical preaching are sufficient to arrest the attention, and to extort a confession of its happy effects, even from some of those who appear to be decidedly hostile to it. A late writer of this kind observes, "Nor ought we to be insensible of the multitudes that have been reclaimed from the most abandoned profligacy,

to a state of religious recollection, by the very laudable exertions of the Evangelical Clergy, and the Dissenting Methodists, that, but for their labour of love, might have continued in a state of sin and impenitency to the close of their mortal existence."*

Evangelical Ministers, though scattered among many religious denominations, are a large and rapidly increasing body of men. In the Church of England they form a very considerable and a highly respectable body. Many of them are distinguished for literary talents, as well as for active and laborious piety. By the blessing of God on their ministrations, a new portion of life and vigour has been infused into that Church; and genuine Christianity has struck its roots deeply into the hearts of men. Though no such extensive and eminent revival of piety has taken place in the Church of Scotland, there are still in that Church a considerable number of men, respectable for their abilities, and venerable for their godliness, whose exertions have been the means of cherishing the remains of devotion, and preserving the languishing flame from being extinguished. The Relief Church has had, and continues to have in her communion, many men of distinguished excellence and piety. The two bodies of the Secession, in Scotland, with those who have separated from them by the name of Old Light, have universally been the depositories of Evangelical religion, and have been faithful to the sacred trust. They possess men distinguished for learning, exemplary for their piety, and who are justly entitled to rank highly as men of talent and genius, and who are well skilled in the art of

* Ingram on the Increase of Methodism, and on Evangelical Preaching.

composition. Of the Antiburghers we need only mention Dr. Jamieson; Dr. M'Crie, and Mr. Ferrier; of the Burghers, Dr. Lawson, and Mr. Dick. Whatever opinion men may form of the peculiarities of these parties, there is one peculiarity on which the Evangelical world should place a high value, that their ministers *all* teach the great doctrines of Christianity. Among the English Dissenters, may be found men celebrated for their intellectual powers, and genuine worth, who would be an honour and a blessing to any church. As the number of Dissenters has greatly increased within these last twenty years, the increase has been principally among those who are Evangelical. Where the great doctrines of Christianity are not preached, even the appearance of religion is soon extinguished. The power of Godliness not being felt, its form quickly disappears. Of men of Evangelical principles all missionary societies, and all missionaries consist. The disciples of Pelagianism, and those who approach that system, are seldom roused to any vigorous measures, for promoting the tenets they have adopted, unless when they are inflamed with resentment against those, who are the advocates of a religion, that warms and melts the heart. The great purposes for which the Son of God came down from Heaven, assumed our nature, suffered and died,—the glory of God, and the salvation of men, appear little to interest persons of their sentiments. The spirit and temper, the active piety and the universal philanthropy of the Apostles, are found associated only with the Gospel which they disseminated and taught.

Many of the numerous Independent Churches are adorned with pastors, learned, able, and eloquent; and whose talents are dignified and consecrated by the

genuine spirit of devotion. The names of Dr. Collyer, Mr. Styles, Mr. Edwards, Mr. Bogue, Mr. Bennet, and Mr. Jay, are well known in the religious world. Mr. Clayton, a respectable Minister in London, has the happiness of being the father of three young men in the same ministry, all of them worthy of such a father:—Among the Baptists, besides the missionaries in India, whose literary efforts have obtained the high meed of Dr. Marsh's praise, and who are entitled to the grateful and affectionate remembrance of every pious man, there are names never to be mentioned but with the highest respect. Mr. Hall possesses a mind of a powerful and vast grasp, and his elocution, as well as the elegance of his style, is calculated to do justice to the penetration of his mind, and to the elevation of his sentiments. Mr. Foster has shown the literary world that he is in possession of a mind richly furnished with general knowledge, as well as with that professional information which is necessary to a minister of Christianity. Mr. Fuller, in various works, has exhibited ratiocinative powers, which though calm and dispassionate, are highly correct and vigorous, and accompanied with an eloquence that is firm and manly. Mr. Hughes is so well known as an eloquent advocate of the Bible Society, that every reader of its reports, and of its Auxiliary Meetings, must know that his talents are respectable, and his oratorial powers interesting and persuasive.

The two bodies of Methodists, the Arminian and Calvinistic, bring a large accession of strength to the cause of Evangelical religion. Among them we behold much fervent piety, active zeal, and indefatigable exertion, for the glory of God and the good of men. *They* also possess men of learning and talent, qualified to shine in the

literary world, as well as in preaching the doctrines of the Cross of Christ. The many accomplishments of Dr. Coke have been justly appreciated by the best judges.* The profound and various learning of Dr. Clarke; the luminous and well informed mind, and the strong energies and powers of Mr. Benson, are known and respected by many who are in no connexion with the society of the Methodists. Of the other party, the distinguished abilities and impressive eloquence of Dr. Drapier, are generally acknowledged, and no doubt there are many other excellent and valuable men in both these connexions, of whom we have not the happiness of having any knowledge.—The Moravian Church, though not very considerable in numbers, is nobly eminent for Evangelical doctrine and animated zeal. In carrying the Gospel to the most barbarous and inhospitable shores, they have with a Divine heroism, encountered the greatest dangers, and patiently submitted with fortitude to the greatest privations, and perseveringly continued in their labours of love, amidst the greatest discouragements; till they have reaped the fruits of their continuance in well doing.

The Episcopal Church in Scotland has been long known to possess many Ministers of highly cultivated talents, and most respectable characters. It would appear from Mr. Adams's account of that Church, of which he himself is a member, that its ministers are generally men of Evangelical sentiments. As they subscribe the thirty nine Articles of the Church of England, they cannot consistently be otherwise. Mr. Adams's own sentiments

* This amiable and excellent man is now in a better world.

are correctly Evangelical. The same thing is to be hoped of the Episcopal Church in America.

The old and new Independent Churches in Scotland are supposed to be universally of Evangelical sentiments, and among the latter there are several ministers of strong natural, and highly cultivated powers: of these Mr. Ewing, and the two Mr. Haldens, are among the most distinguished.—In America, the same Evangelical doctrines are said to have been widely diffused in the Presbyterian, as well as among the Independent Churches, and also among the Methodists.—In Ireland, which has long been sunk into a state of ignorance and supineness, great exertions have been made, both by the pious Clergy of the Church, and by Evangelical Dissenters, to rouse men from their general apathy, and to awaken in their minds a sense of the importance of the truths of the Gospel. In these labours none have been more indefatigable, or more successful, than the Methodists.—The Reformed and Lutheran Churches on the Continent have in many instances, shaken off the slumbers of more than a century, and felt the resuscitating and warming rays of Evangelical piety quickening them to the most vigorous exertions in the cause of religion.

To every pious mind it must communicate sensations of the strongest and most refined pleasure to know, that in the very midst of India, and though surrounded with the gloom of the most abject superstition and the polluted rites of pagan idolatry, there is a Christian Church that has, probably ever since the Apostolic age, preserved the purity of the Christian faith and worship, and still continues to have that holy fire burning on her altars. Such is the Syrian Church, with its venerable Bishop Mar Dionesius, at its head. This aggregate body comprehends

fifty-five particular churches. "The following," says Dr. Buchanan, "are the chief doctrines of this ancient Church:

"First.—They hold the doctrine of a vicarious Atonement for the sins of men, by the blood and merits of Christ, and of the justification of the soul before God, 'by faith alone' in that Atonement.

"Second.—They maintain the Regeneration, or new birth of the soul to righteousness, by the influence of the Spirit of God, which change is called in their books, from the Greek, *Meta-Noia*, or change of mind.

"Third.—In regard to the Trinity, the creed of the Syrian Christians accords with that of St. Athanasius, but without the damnatory clauses. In a written and official communication to Colonel Macaulay, the English Resident at Travancore, the Metropolitan states it to be as follows: 'We believe in the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, three persons in one God, neither confounding the persons, nor dividing the substance, one in three and three in one. The Father generator, the Son generated, and the Holy Ghost proceeding. None is before or after the other; in majesty, honour, might, and power, co-equal; Unity in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity.'—'That in the appointed time, through the disposition of the Father and the Holy Ghost, the Son appeared on earth for the salvation of mankind: that he was born of the Virgin Mary, through the means of the Holy Ghost, and was incarnate God and man.' "•

The same Author observes that, in the East, the vestiges of Evangelical religion everywhere present themselves.

• Dr. Buchanan's *Christian Researches*, pp. 124, 125.—Dr. B. visited these Churches in 1806.

These, he says, relate to the Trinity in Unity; to the incarnation of the Deity; to a vicarious Atonement for sin; and to the influence of the Divine Spirit on the mind of man. "Now," adds this excellent man, "if we should be able to prove that *all* these are represented in the systems of the East, will any man venture to affirm that it happens by chance?" The testimony, which the religion of the Hindoos gives to the doctrine of the Trinity, we have already seen in our Reflections on that subject.

The second is the doctrine of the Incarnation of the Deity.—"The Hindoos believe that one of the persons in their Trinity, (and that too the second person), was 'manifested in the flesh.' Hence their fables of the Avatars, or Incarnations of Vishnoo. And this doctrine is found over almost the whole of Asia. Whence then originated this idea 'that God should become man, and take our nature upon him?' The Hindoos do not consider, that it was an Angel merely that became man, (like some philosophers in Europe), but God himself. Can there be any doubt, that the fabulous Incarnations of the eastern mythology are derived from the real Incarnation of the Son of God, or from the prophecies that went before it? Jesus the Messiah is the true Avatar."

Third.—The doctrine of a vicarious Atonement for sin, by the shedding of blood.—To this day, in Hindostan, the people bring the goat or kid to the temple, and the priest sheds the blood of the innocent victim. Nor is this peculiar to Hindostan; throughout the whole East, the doctrine of a sacrifice for sin seems to exist, in one form or other. Ever since "Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain;" ever since Noah, the father of the new world, "offered up burnt offerings on the altar," sacrifices have been offered up in almost every na-

tion, as if for a constant memorial to mankind that "without shedding of blood there is no remission of sin."—Heb. ix. 22.

Fourth.—The influence of the Divine Spirit on the minds of men.—In the most ancient writings of the Hindoos, some of which have been published, it is asserted, that "the Divine Spirit, or light of holy knowledge," influences the minds of men. And the man who is the subject of such influence is called "the man twice born." Many chapters are devoted to the duties, character, and virtues of "the man twice born."

Other doctrines might be illustrated by similar analogies. The characters of the Mosaic ceremonial law pervade the whole system of the Hindoo ritual and worship. Now, if these analogies were merely partial, or accidental, they would be less important: but they are not accidental, as every man who is erudite in the Holy Scriptures, and in oriental mythology, well knows. They are general and systematic. Has it ever been alleged that the Light of Nature could teach such doctrines as those which we have above enumerated? Some of them are contrary to the Light of Nature. Every where in the East there appears to be a *counterfeit* of the true doctrine. The inhabitants have lost sight of the only true God, and they apply their traditional notions to false gods. These doctrines are unquestionably relics of the first faith of the earth; they bear the strong characters of God's primary revelation to man, which neither the power of man, nor time itself, hath been able to destroy; but which have endured from age to age, like the works of nature, the moon and stars, which God hath created, incorruptible.*

* Dr. Buchanan's *Christian Researches*, p. p. 272, 273, 274, 275, 276.

Among the ministers of various denominations whose sentiments are Evangelical, it cannot be denied that there are to be found weak men, but there is no reason to suppose that their number is proportionally greater than may be found among those who have adopted a system Anti-evangelical. Some men of violent spirit and unhallowed tempers are likewise to be found in their society, as they are to be found among the partizans of every religious creed. There have also, no doubt, been some characters among them detected, who have been a disgrace to the professions of religion which they have made, but in this class these have never been numerous. Let them be compared with those who have embraced an opposite system; in talent they will be found not to be inferior; in morals much more correct and exemplary; in zeal for religion much more abundant; and in disinterested virtue superlatively eminent. What a celebrated writer among them, who has touched the infirmities of his brethren with no light hand, has justly said of the Evangelical Ministers of the Church of England, may, with the strictest justice, be said of Evangelical Ministers in general—"As a body they are more than free from immoralities."* In the number of the Evangelical are to be numbered almost all the Calvinists and the genuine followers of Arminius. There is also a considerable number of those who take no decisive part between these systems, so far as they are opposed to each other. These neutrals suppose that the love of system has carried both Calvinists and Arminians to extremes, and made them both seize the one half of the Bible with avi-

* "Zeal Without Innovation," p. 162.

dity, while they set no proportional value on the other. Two excellent writers, Mr. Wilberforce and Mrs. More, correctly and decidedly Evangelical, have taken no part whatever in this controversy. The former, in his "Practical View," &c. has shown a happy union of strong intellectual energies, and language elegantly polished, and blended with the warmest, yet soberest piety.* The

* Mr. Evans, in his Sketch, represents Mr. Wilberforce as an advocate for the Methodists. "The Methodists have found an advocate in William Wilberforce, Esq. M.P. who pleads their cause at some length in his Treatise on Vital Christianity." The cause Mr. Wilberforce pleads is that of Evangelical Religion in general, without the smallest reference to the peculiarities by which the Methodists are distinguished from other denominations. Mr. E. must have known, or might have known, that Mr. Wilberforce was a regular member of the Church of England. It was therefore utterly indecorous to treat a Gentleman, entitled to the respect of the human race for his exertions in the cause of humanity, in such a manner. But Mr. E. very well knew, that with a certain class of men, to be informed that a man is a Methodist, is to be informed that he is a fool and an enthusiast. Every well informed person will indeed be ashamed of such ignorance and prejudice. The writer who can allow himself to give publicity to such misrepresentations, has forfeited every claim to candour and impartiality. Mr. Wilberforce's forcible statement of Human depravity is, unquestionably, the cause of the offence Mr. E. has taken at the Treatise on Vital Christianity. In a letter which Mr. E. addressed from the Press to Dr. Hawker he asks "In what light will the Court of Heaven view those who libel Human Nature, pronouncing it to be rotten to the core?" We shall take the liberty to ask him another question, In what light will the Court of Heaven view those who libel that infinite wisdom and love which made the blessed God provide a ransom for our souls, in the Atonement of his own Son, and a Sanctifier, in the person of his Spirit, to regenerate our natures and to create us again to righteousness, whilst, according to Mr. E.'s system of Divinity, we were neither liable to his wrath, nor unable to accomplish our own sanctification? Or, let us state the question thus, In what light will the Court of Heaven view those who, when the Supreme Judge has pronounced the imaginations of Man's heart to be evil, and only evil continually, and unregenerated men to be enemies to Him in their heart, by wicked works, dare to call his decisions abominable, and represent them as those of a tyrant? If the doctrine of human depravity is taught in Scripture, they themselves must be sensible of the consequence of such hard speeches. If those who believe the doctrine are in a mistake on this subject, the libel surely cannot be a malicious one, for they include themselves in the charge as deeply

latter, in a variety of performances, has dedicated her fine talents and taste to the doing of good, been a blessing to society, an ornament to her own sex, and a noble example to ours. Mr. Hall and Mr. Jay among the Dissenters, both masterly writers, have, in their sermons, supported, with distinguished abilities, the interests of Evangelical piety, without declaring themselves on the side either of Calvinism or of Arminianism.

The progress of Evangelical religion in the Church of England and among the Dissenters has lately awakened the fears of many, who are hostile to the distinguishing doctrines of Christianity. A most furious attack was commenced on Evangelical preachers and on Evangelical preaching; in a production, the title of which was "*Hints to the Public and the Legislature, on the Nature and Effects of Evangelical Preaching,*" by a Barrister. Two other parts were afterwards added. The writer, evidently a Socinian, hypocritically pretends great con-

as any of their fellow men; a demonstration that it proceeds from no bad principle, from no want of love either to God or to man, but from (supposing them to be mistaken) a greater concern for the honour of God, than for their own vindication. But let us suppose that the vindicators of human nature are in a mistake (and they surely are as liable to mistake as those whom they opposed), are they prepared to prove, before the Court of Heaven, that it was not pride, or arrogance of mind which led them to apologize for their own sins, and to refuse submission to the Righteousness of God, that made them choose the part they have taken in this controversy. Mr. E. must think strangely of the laws by which the Court of Heaven decides, if he supposes that they make it a high offence for men to take part with it against themselves. Those who believe the doctrine of Original sin consider this as a point at issue between God and man. They therefore condemn themselves and justify God. Did they ascribe this corruption to God, they would be guilty of blasphemy. Did they exculpate themselves and others of the same sentiments, they would loudly proclaim that self-love, and not humility, was the main-spring of their actions. But as they are witnesses against their opponents, and for themselves, it is easy to see on which side self-love is most likely to preponderate.

cern for the Church of England, though his own creed is destructive of her best interests and subversive of her whole Liturgy. If passion, misrepresentation, and ill language, can effect any thing, this Gentleman has unquestionably proved his point. He charges Evangelical Ministers with teaching "that God made men originally sinful and depraved;" represents them as the enemies of morality; calls them fools, madmen, blockheads, pious pontiffs, bloated lay priests, &c. &c., and says, he might as well reason with Aldgate pump. Dr. Hawker, Dr. Collyer, and Mr. Styles have replied to the Barrister, with temperate language and a force of argument, to which such a writer was scarcely entitled.



ON ANTINOMIANISM AND ANTINOMIANS.

THAT the Son of God came into the world to redeem men from the Moral Government of God is a position so wretchedly absurd, and so horribly impious, that did not facts forbid the conclusion, we would be disposed to think the existence of Antinomians among those who believe in the doctrine of Redemption, a thing almost impossible. The Sacrifice and Atonement of Christ are the means of religion; but the end of it is the reconciliation of sinners to God, and of God to sinners. The sufferings of our blessed Saviour exhibit, to all intelligent beings, the criminality of rebellion against God, more forcibly than the everlasting destruction of the whole human race could possibly have done. He who believes

in the original dignity of the Son of God, in his Satisfaction to the justice of his Father, for our sins, by bearing the punishment of them on his own body ; and yet considers this infinite sacrifice as intended to deliver us from that subjection to God, as the Governor of the Universe, which is equally the *duty* and the *happiness* of all created intelligences, has united in his creed the greatest possible contradictions. As we cannot suppose that blessed angels, or the redeemed saints of God, can ever be independent of their Creator, we cannot suppose that they will ever be exempted from his moral government, or ever be without law. Their blessedness and their holiness will, to eternity, consist in perfect obedience to his laws. The sum of the moral law is the supreme love of God, and the love of our neighbours, as of ourselves. The man who supposes that the Redemption of the Gospel sets aside either the one, or both of these two great commands, blasphemes the grace of God, by making Christ the minister of iniquity.

An abuse of the Gospel seems early to have taken place in the Christian Church, and to have led to Antinomianism various professors of the Gospel. This fact appears evidently from the Epistle of St. James. In his days men had arisen who advanced a claim to faith, and who were satisfied with a faith that he pronounced to be dead, and unavailing. One of Luther's disciples, Agricola, pleaded that Christians are not subject to the moral law, as a rule of obedience ; but under the Gospel as a dispensation of faith, working by love. He was opposed and confuted by his master. From him the term Antinomian was applied to those who adopted his sentiments. It is composed of two Greek Words, signifying *against*

the law. Labadie, who was a Jesuit in France, and afterwards became a Protestant, and a Minister at Middleburgh, in Zealand, adopted the doctrines of Antinomianism. He was deposed by the synod of Dort, in 1669. His followers were called Labadists. They contended vehemently, that all morality should be banished from sermons. During the Usurpation of Cromwell, Antinomianism is said to have had many disciples, whose system and manners were equally licentious. They are said to have maintained, that when men are justified they are wholly sanctified. In other words, while some merge Justification in Sanctification, these, on the other hand, lost Sanctification in Justification. They are also said to have taught that a believer has no inherent righteousness; that God will save us to the uttermost without any holiness of our own; that no action done by a believer, though it be contrary to the moral law, is sinful; and that he is neither required to confess his sins, to repent of them, nor to forsake them; with many other blasphemous and abominable sayings. Rutherford, and many other pious men, have written against them. He was answered by Dr. Crisp, who was first an Arminian, and afterwards an Antinomian; but though the doctrines he embraced were licentious, he is said not to have been licentious in his life. He is understood to have been a man of large estate, and of a beneficent disposition. He died in 1641. Mr. John Saltmarsh, of Magdalen College, is another Antinomian writer. Mr. Neale represents him as a man of fine active fancy, a good preacher, and a chaplain to the Parliamentary army. Whatever apology may be made for the man, the cause will admit of none. Doctrines which set men at liberty from obedi-

ence to the laws of God, are, above all others, dishonouring to God, and destructive to the souls of men.

Though it is to be hoped that few teachers in our days venture to lay down positions so absurd and immoral as those which we have mentioned, it cannot be denied that instances of extravagant doctrine, and which seem to look toward Antinomianism, are sometimes found to occur. Some ministers have affirmed that the whole work of man's salvation was finished by Jesus Christ on the cross. That the price of our redemption was fully paid there, is certainly a glorious truth; but as our salvation necessarily includes our complete sanctification, it cannot be complete till Christians be presented without spot or blemish before the throne of God.—The love of paradox, and an ambition to say things uncommon and new, have often diverted men whose imagination was stronger than their judgment, from that sobriety of doctrine which, though it dazzles less, more confirms and invigorates the faith and hope of Christians. Among those who, in our days, have been charged, and not unjustly charged, with Antinomianism, none have arisen whose progress has been so rapid as that of Mr. Huntington. From a coal-heaver, who could not read his Bible, within a few years he advanced to be a preacher, followed by thousands. Being a man of genius, and possessing a vigorous mind, he attained, with fewer faults than could have been expected, the knowledge of the art of composition, superior even to some who enjoyed a liberal education. His Bank of Faith, Arminian Skeleton, &c. &c. display a wonderful acquaintance with Scripture, and the last particularly, a luxury of fancy very uncommon. All his performances exhibit marks of a mind active and ardent, but extremely addicted to extravagance. The opposition he met from

some parts of the religious world with whom he came in contact, from the circumstance of having changed his name, and some other instances of his conduct when he made no profession of religion, was certainly unreasonable, and probably contributed not a little to form that disposition to satire, which is always incongruous with the temper of a Christian minister. Fondness for novelty, and the desire of forcing a passage through regions untrodden before, perhaps more than any hostility to practical religion, seem to have fixed upon him the name of Antinomian. Many of his comments on particular texts of Scripture, were, to the last degree, whimsical and absurd.

Of Antinomians there is a particular kind who are frequently to be found, and who severely, and justly, censure speculative Antinomianism; never reflecting that they themselves are practically, and in conduct, what, in sentiment and in system, they condemn in others. Such are all those who, on questions of morality between man and man, are rigid interpreters of the social virtues; but who with respect to the personal duties of sobriety and chastity, and with respect to the Divine virtues of secret, family, and public devotion, the consecration of the Lord's day, and the punctual celebration of the institutions of the Gospel, claim great indulgences from the considerations of God's being merciful, and of the Atonement made by Christ for the sins of men. These are Antinomians of the worst kind, who encourage themselves in the neglect, or in the transgression, of the most sacred laws of moral obligation, by abusing the doctrines of natural, or of revealed religion. In short, all hopes of salvation without holiness, and all attempts to calculate with how little purity of heart and life a man may hope to escape hell, and to get possession of heaven, are Anti-

nomian abominations, and their tendency will ever be found to be of the most destructive kind to the souls of men.



ON CHURCH GOVERNMENT.

THE end of Civil Society being the protection of the liberty, property, and lives of its members, government of some kind or other is absolutely necessary to the obtaining of it. Laws must not only be made, but executed, and consequently a legislative is not more necessary than an executive power. The end of Religious Society being the glory of God, and the present purity and the eternal happiness of men, these are to be secured in the Church of Christ by committing the execution of the laws of the Gospel, to persons who are qualified to discharge that sacred trust; that thus the Church may preserve that purity of doctrine, that correctness of manners, and that order and harmony which Christianity inculcates. The first question that requires our consideration here is, Has the Saviour appointed any particular form of Church Government: or, has he left the particular form to be determined by the local opinions and circumstances, prevalent in those places in which Christian Churches should be planted? Some contend, that to suppose our Saviour to have left his Church without prescribing the mode of its government, is to suppose him inferior in fidelity to Moses, the prophet of the Jewish dispensation. To this others reply, that the sup-

position can no more be an impeachment of Christ's fidelity, than the not appointing any form of Civil Government is an impeachment of the goodness of God, as the Creator and Governor of mankind ; and that there seems to be no reason why the Redeemer of the world should do that in the one case, which the Creator of it left undone in the other. It is evident that general reasoning cannot decide this question. It is necessary to its decision, that the particular institute of Heaven be pointed out in the New Testament. Till this is done, conviction will not be produced. When it is done, every Christian should consider the question as set at rest.

Some respectable men and pious Christians have supposed, that the quantum of power, which was necessary to be committed to the Ministers of Christianity, is a question of prudence, and must be settled by particular circumstances. These have often been called Latitudinarians on this subject. Their general maxim has been that which Pope has adopted, on the subject of civil Government,

*" For forms of Government, let fools contest :
 Whate'er is best administer'd, is best."*

Those who are advocates for a particular form of Church Government must be careful, not only to examine the practice of the Apostolic Churches, but also the institutions of the Apostles. The use of any particular form of Church Government by the Apostles, is certainly a strong argument for its excellence, and well entitle it to a decided preference to any other mode whatsoever ;

but it will not prove that every other mode of it is absolutely interdicted and unlawful. It is to the institutions, or to the general prescriptions of the Apostles, therefore, that their references should be made, and if those references be accurate, and fully made out, the mode which is established must be considered as a matter of sound doctrine, which no circumstances can alter, or modify. The forms of Church Government, the obligations of which have been vehemently debated in the Christian world, are four. One is, the universal authority of the Pope of Rome. This is justly exploded by all Protestants. The other three are the subjects of dispute, among Protestants themselves. On this subject we shall endeavour, impartially to give the outlines of the arguments used by the advocates of these different systems. A moderate volume could hardly compress the substance of what has been urged, in the dilated arguments of the disputants, on each side of the question. Among Protestants, there are many who have adopted the Episcopalian form of Church Government, as the Apostolic, and the only regular mode: there are many who contend that the Presbyterian form is the only legitimate and scriptural one; and there are many who consider both these forms as equally unknown to the Scriptures, and argue that Independency was the government of the first Christian Churches, and the rule by which all Christian Societies are bound to regulate themselves.

We shall begin with Episcopacy. Impartiality requires us to state, that the controversy here is not, whether Bishops or Overseers be acknowledged as officers who constitute an essential part of Church rulers. Both Presbyterians and Independents contend that they are

essential to the formation of Church Government. The question is, are Bishops a distinct and superior order, who rank by themselves, and whose office differs from that of the Pastor and Elder, as one which was designed to rule and govern the latter? The advocates for Episcopal Government plead for the superiority of Bishops; Presbyterians and Independents contend that Bishops and Elders, or Pastors, are only different names for the same office.

Episcopalians consider their position, that Bishops are a superior order to Elders, as clearly supported by such proofs as these:—First. They argue from our Saviour's institution of the twelve Apostles, as an order distinct from the Seventy whom he commissioned to preach the Gospel, that they are superior to them. That the Seventy were ordained Ministers of the Gospel is evident from our Saviour's address to them, immediately after they were selected, to go two and two, before him. "He that heareth you, heareth me; and he that despiseth you, despiseth me; and he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me."—Luke, x. 16. Now, say the friends of Episcopacy, that these Seventy occupied the place of Presbyters or Elders, is so evident, that it is confessed by all. But the twelve Apostles were always distinguished from them, and are represented as chosen from the whole disciples, to fill a distinct and an appropriate office. Had the offices and ranks of the Seventy and of the Apostles been the same, they would not have been so carefully distinguished, as we see that they are. It is likewise to be attended to, that in the catalogue of Ecclesiastical Ministers, (Eph. iv. 11, 1 Cor. xii. 28,) they are mentioned as distinct offices, and that of the Apostles is declared to be the primary office, "God hath set some in

the Church, *first* Apostles, &c." The testimony of antiquity also proves that from the Seventy, those were generally selected who succeeded in any vacancy of the Apostolic office. Matthias, who succeeded Judas, is affirmed by Eusebius and Epiphanius to have been one of the Seventy. Philip is represented by these fathers of the Church, as succeeding St. Paul at Cæsarea; and Clement, St. Peter at Rome. Now, if these Elders and Presbyters succeeded by election to the Apostolic office, it is demonstrable that the offices must have been different, and the one superior to the other; for no man can succeed to an office which he had before, nor receive an accession of power and trust when he receives nothing with which he is not already invested. "So that here are plainly *two* sorts of Ecclesiastical *officers*, the one superior to the other, of our Saviour's own *institution* and *appointment*; and therefore if this institution be still valid, there must still be a *Superiority* and a *Subordination* between the Officers and Minister of his Church, and consequently the Government thereof must still be Episcopal, i. e. by some *superior Officers*, presiding and superintending over other inferior ones. I know it is objected, that this superiority of the Apostles over the Seventy was only in *office*, but not in *power* or *jurisdiction*; but since it is the *office* that is the immediate subject of the power belonging to it, I would fain know whether superiority of office must not necessarily include superiority in power? for *office* without *power* is an empty name, that signifies nothing: and every degree of superiority of office must be accompanied with power to exert itself in acts of superiority, otherwise it will be utterly in vain and to no purpose; so that either the superiority of the Apostolic office over other church-

officers must be void and insignificant, or it must have a proportionable superiority of power over them, inseparably *inherent* in it. But it is further objected, that, supposing the Apostolate to be superior to the other Ecclesiastical orders in *power*, and *office*, yet it was but temporary; it being instituted by our Saviour in subservience to the present exigency and necessity of things, without any intention of deriving it down to the Church in a continued *succession*. To which I answer in short, that this is said without so much as a plausible colour of reason; both that our Saviour *instituted* this office, and that in his institution he never gave the least intimation to the world, that he intended it only for a certain season. Now, if men will presume to declare Christ's institutions *temporary*, without producing the '*least intimation*' of his will, that he so designed them, they may with the same warrant repeal *all* the *institutions* of Christianity; and even the *two sacraments* will lie as much at their mercy as the institution of the *Apostolic order*, which, unless they can prove it repealed by the same authority which established it, will be sufficient to prescribe to all ages and nations; for the obligations of Divine Commands are dissolvable only by Divine Countermands, and for men to declare any Divine institution void, before God had so declared it, is to over-rule the will of God by their own arrogant presumptions."*

Second.—The advocates of Episcopacy contend that the Apostles, not only exercised in their own persons, that superiority over Presbyters or Elders, which they received with their office, but conveyed it down to their

* Scott's Christian Life, Vol. III, p. 391, 392;

successors; which they consider as a convincing argument, that it was not a temporary expedient, but a permanent institution. They observe, that though the number of the Apostles during our Saviour's abode on earth was only twelve, and though the number continued fixed for some time after his Ascension to Heaven, yet when the boundaries of the Church were mightily extended by numerous converts in Gentile nations, they added to their number several other Apostles, to whom they committed the same office and dignity. The first was James, our Lord's near relation, and called his brother, who evidently was none of the twelve, and is reckoned apart from them by St. Paul, (1 Cor. xv. 5, 6, 7) and yet called by him an Apostle, (Gall. i. 19). The same person is by the concurrent testimony of all the Christian fathers, called the first Bishop of Jerusalem. St. Jerome, in his Comment on Isaiah, calls him the thirteenth Apostle, that is, the first that was made an Apostle after the twelve, being so called, from his possessing the power and dignity of Bishop of Jerusalem. In the first Council that was held there, we find the sentence he gave with respect to circumcision and other matters of dispute, was decisive. Afterwards we are told that, when Paul and his company were come to Jerusalem, the brethren received him gladly, and that *the day following Paul went in with them unto James, and all the Elders were present.*—Acts, xxi. 17, 18. "Now, for what other reason should Paul go in unto James more especially, or upon what other account should all the Elders be present with James, but that he was a person of the *greatest note* and figure in the Church of Jerusalem? and for the same reason, in all probability, St. Paul mentions James before Peter and John, dis-

coursing of a meeting he had with them at Jerusalem, (Gal. ii. 9) because though Peter and John were two of the principal of the twelve Apostles, and St. James was not so much as one of that number, yet in the Church of *Jerusalem*, he had the priority of them both; now considering that St. James is called an *Apostle*, and considering the *preference* he had, in all these instances *above* the other Apostles at *Jerusalem*, it is at least highly probable that he was *peculiarly* the Apostle of the Church at *Jerusalem*. But if to all this evidence, we add the most early testimonies of Christian antiquity, we shall advance the probability to a demonstration; for by the unanimous consent of all Ecclesiastical writers, St. James was the first Bishop of Jerusalem.*

The second instance to which they point is that of Epaphroditus, who is styled the Apostle of the Philippians. "But I supposed it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother and companion in labour, and fellow soldier, *but your Apostle*."—Phil. ii. 25. Theodoret, upon the place, gives this reason why he was called the Apostle of the Philippians,—he was entrusted with Episcopal Government, as being their Bishop.

The third instance is that of Titus, and some others, not expressly named. "Whether any do inquire of Titus, he is my partner and fellow helper concerning you: or our brethren be inquired of, they are *the Apostles of the Churches*." From this they argue that Titus was evidently invested with Apostolical, or Episcopal authority, over the Church of Crete, and possessed of a right to judge what things were wanting,

* Scott's Christian Life, p. p. 395, 396.

and to supply them, to judge what things required correction, and to reform them, which is a plain demonstration of his superiority in that Church. St. Paul also gives him authority to ordain Elders in every city. They argue that it is plain that there were Elders, or Presbyters in the Church of Crete, before Titus was left there by the Apostle, for St. Paul had formed Churches in several cities of that Island, and as to the constituting of Churches, Elders were necessary, it is as evident say they, that these Presbyters had no power to ordain Elders as Titus had, for upon the supposition that they possessed that power, what necessity could there be for the Apostle's leaving him with a new power to do that, which the Presbyters, already ordained, had sufficient power to do? If the Presbyters had the power of ordination, this new power of Titus must have been not only unnecessary, but mischievous; as it would have appeared to be an invasion of the power of the Presbytery, and rather have provoked strife and contention than been an expedient to produce peace and good order. They conclude their argument on this instance with the testimony of Eusebius, Theodoret, Chrysostom, Jerome, Ambrose, and several others of the fathers, and early Ecclesiastic writers, who all affirm that Titus was ordained by St. Paul, the first Bishop of Crete.

The fourth instance, say they, is Timothy, who evidently appears, by St. Paul's Epistles to him, to have been vested with Episcopal authority over Presbyters and Deacons; to take care that none should be admitted a Deacon, without sufficient trial; and none ordained an Elder, till he had acquitted himself well in the office of a Deacon (1 Tim. iii. 10, 13); to inspect their lives, to receive accusations, and to judge of their conduct (v. 19,

20); to rule without preferring one to another, and without partiality (v. 21); which acts of government all proceed upon an acknowledged authority and superiority. And, as the Apostle recognises him as possessed of this authority, he also gives him the power of ordination, and instructs him in the manner how he ought to perform it; that he should lay hands suddenly on no man; neither be partaker of other men's sins. They observe also, that the argument acquires additional force from this circumstance, that the Apostle himself had laboured three years together in the Church of Ephesus, of which Timothy was Bishop a longer space than in any other Church, had reduced it to much greater perfection, and consequently had formed a Presbytery in it, as he did in all other Churches, which proves this Episcopal power to have been no temporary arrangement, suiting an imperfect state of things, but a permanent institution, ordained in that Church, and by consequence in all Churches. With the divine authority of St. Paul's Epistles, they observe that the testimony of all Ecclesiastical antiquity conspires to prove that Timothy was the first Bishop of the Church of Ephesus. "Other instances might be given, but these are sufficient to show, that the Apostles did not look upon our Saviour's institution of a *superior* order of Ecclesiastical Officers as a *temporary* thing, that was to expire with them, but as a standing model of Ecclesiastical Government, since they derived to others that superiority over the Churches of Christ which he communicated to them."*

In the next place the advocates of Episcopacy argue from the general consent of the primitive fathers. St.

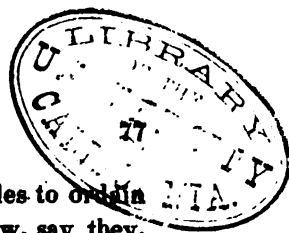
* Scott's Christian Life, p. 402.

Clement who, as Irenæus tells us, saw the Apostles, and conversed familiarly with them, mentions in *his epistle* to the Corinthians, three orders of Ecclesiastical officers in his time, whom he calls the High Priests, the Priests, and the Levites; which words can be understood no otherwise than of Bishop, Presbyter, and the Deacons. Ignatius, the next of the fathers whose writings have come down to our times, in the six epistles which he wrote on his way to martyrdom, has given the most ample evidence of the existence of the three orders, Bishops, Presbyters, and Deacons, in the Christian Church, and enjoins the two latter, as well as the laity, to be subject to the former. In his epistle to the Trallians, "What is the Bishop," says he, "but he that hath authority and power? What is the Presbytery, but a sacred constitution of Counsellors and Assessors to the Bishop? What are the Deacons, but Imitators of Christ, and Ministers to the Bishop, as he was to the Father?"

The testimony of the writers of the next age, who had intercourse with those who had conversed with the Apostles, the advocates of Episcopacy observe, are expressly to the same purpose. Of this number are Justin Martyr, Hegesippus, Dionysius, Bishop of Corinth, and Clemens Alexandrinus. These all represent Bishops as acknowledged by the Churches in their time, to be superior to Presbyters.

The last argument of the advocates of Episcopacy that our limits will admit, is taken from our Saviour's addressing the epistles in the Apocalypse to the Seven Churches in Asia, to single persons in each of those Churches, who are called the Angels of the Churches. That there was a plurality of Elders in some of those Churches is evident, and it is most probable that there was such in all

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of them, as it was the practice of the Apostles to ordain Elders or Presbyters in every Church. Now, say they, if Presbyters had been the highest order in the Seven Churches, would not the epistles have been directed to them as the Ministers of those Churches? But we find them directed to *single* persons, which evidently proves, that in each of the Seven Churches, there was one person who was superior to the Presbytery, and to whom it belonged to superintend those Ministers, as well as the private members of the Church. The name given them, *Angels*, likewise shows them to have been persons of high rank and eminence, and points them out as distinguished from all the other officers of the Seven Churches. They are likewise represented as persons invested with authority to try and reject cheats, impostors, and immoral livers. Some of them are praised for exercising that authority; others censured for not exerting it. But upon the supposition that they had not full power to act, they could neither have deserved praise in the one case, nor censure in the other.

Some of the advocates for Episcopacy have taken a higher, and some a lower ground, in contending for that form of government. Some of them have considered Bishops as absolutely necessary to the very existence of a Christian church. The consequence of which position is, that one half of the religious societies called Protestant, are not Churches of Christ, and the ordinances of religion dispensed in them are of no value, the dispensers not having episcopal ordination. These sentiments were adopted by Archbishop Whitgift, and some high doctrinal Calvinists in the latter part of Elizabeth's reign, by Archbishop Laud, in the reign of Charles I, and by many of the Bishops in the reign of Charles II. In the reign of

Queen Anne, they were revived by one Dodwell. "He pursued these notions so far," says Bishop Burnet, "that he asserted that the souls of men were naturally mortal, but that the immortalizing virtue was conveyed by baptism, given by persons episcopally ordained."* This certainly was tremendous doctrine to all ungodly and careless livers in the Church, but very comfortable to all such persons who were Dissenters; since the one had nothing to look for but eternal misery, and the other nothing to fear but the eternal sleep of death. Such doctrines never did, and never will do any real service to Episcopacy. The strongest and most convincing argument for the power of Bishops, and that of which all men are equally capable of feeling the force, is the pious and properly directed use of it. With this application it will seldom be questioned in the countries where it is established; and without this, there are no laws, which, in a free country, will be long able to protect and secure its operation.

The general sentiments of the Church of England at present are supposed to be as follows. They believe Episcopacy to be the best form of Church Government, and that which they think had the sanction of the Apostles, and which certainly obtained the general consent in the times next to the Apostolic age, of which we have any certain history. They think it the most venerable, and the most effective mode of government; but they do not suppose the Grace of God and the influences of his Holy Spirit to be confined to the Churches which have adopted it, and to be withdrawn from those who have

* Burnet's History of his Own Times, Vol. II, p. 361.

rejected it. They believe it necessary to the perfection, but not to the existence of a Church. The three branches of the Legislature recognise the Church of Scotland as a true Church. The conciliatory spirit and language of an office of prayer, drawn up by the Dignitaries of the Church, on a recent public occasion, shows that they acknowledge the Foreign Churches, and such of the Dissenters as retain the great doctrines of Christianity, as their Christian brethren. With this statement the sentiments of Bishop Pretyma (now Tomline) agree,* and also those of Mr. Gisborne.† Besides the authorities to which we have already referred, the arguments for Episcopacy will be found in Hooker's Ecclesiastical Polity, Chillingworth's Apostolic Institution of Episcopacy Demonstrated, Bishop Hall's Episcopacy by Divine Right, and Bishop Burnet on the Thirty Nine Articles.

To the arguments for Episcopacy, the Presbyterians and Independents, who contend that Elders, Presbyters, and Bishops are only different names for the same office, reply:—They acknowledge the Apostles to have been a superior order to the Seventy, and also an order superior to Elders, or Presbyters. But they insist that these were extraordinary Ministers, who could not, in the nature of things, have any successors in the later times of the Christian Church. To qualify a man for being an Apostle, they observe it was necessary that he had been a witness of our Saviour's resurrection; or, in other words, that he had seen our Lord after his resurrection from the dead. "Wherefore of these men which have companied

* Elements of Christian Theology. Vol. II, p. 398.

† Familiar Survey of the Christian Religion, p. 496, 497.

with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from the baptism of John, unto that same day that he was taken up from us, must one be ordained, to be a *witness* with us of *his resurrection*.”—Acts, i. 21, 22. They observe in the second place, that to qualify a man to be an Apostle, it was necessary that he should be possessed of miraculous powers, which the Apostle Paul calls the signs of an Apostle. “Truly *the signs of an Apostle* were wrought among you in all patience, in signs and wonders, and mighty deeds.”—2 Cor. xii. 12. In the third place, inspiration was another gift necessary to the office of an Apostle, for as he was the messenger of God to the Churches, before there was any complete canon of Scripture, it was necessary that he should be possessed of those gifts which rendered him infallible in every point of doctrine. This our Saviour had promised to his Apostles previous to his death. “I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of Truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth.”—John, xvi. 12, 13. When *any* of these qualifications, and certainly much more when *all* of them were wanting, they consider pretensions to the Apostleship, not only as defective, but as without even the appearance of right.—They do not contend that the number of the Apostles was always limited to twelve, the original number of which they consisted, but that they all possessed the qualification just mentioned. Epaphroditus, Titus, and some others, are indeed called the Apostles of the Church of Philippi, or of some other Church, or Churches. The word Apostle signifies messenger, and in this general sense it was applicable to any Presbyter who carried the message of Christ to any Church. But neither was Epaphroditus,

nor Timothy, nor Titus, an Apostle in that appropriate and distinguishing sense in which the term is applied to the twelve. Nor are they ever called the Apostles of Christ, but only the Apostles, or messengers of the Churches. In this lax sense of the word, Luther has been called the Apostle of Germany, and Knox the Apostle of Scotland; but none of them either possessed, or claimed apostolic powers in the strict sense of the word. Timothy and Titus, we cannot for a moment suppose to have been inspired men. The two epistles written by Paul to Timothy, and the epistle to Titus, evidently teach us to draw an inference directly opposite to their inspiration. A letter of directions to a man inspired is not only unnecessary, but absurd. It does not appear that either of them had conversed with our Saviour, or seen him after his resurrection. Paul was qualified to be an Apostle by an extraordinary and miraculous vision of him. "Am I not an Apostle? Have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord?"—1 Cor. ix. 1. Nor is there any evidence that either Timothy, Titus, or Epaphroditus, were possessed of miraculous powers, or of the *signs* of an Apostle. But, (say the different advocates for the Presbyterian and for the Independent form of government,) supposing them all to have been Apostles, in the strictest sense of the word, no argument will have the smallest force, from this circumstance, for the Apostleship of men in these later times. No man for these last sixteen hundred years has either been the witness of our Saviour's resurrection, or has possessed the inspiration that renders infallible, or the miraculous powers that accompanied the ministrations of the Apostles. If the qualifications remain in any persons, let them boldly ad-

vance their claim to the office; but if they are gone, the Apostles have no successors.

To the argument from Timothy and Titus being invested with the powers of ordination, they answer that there is not the shadow of proof that either of them ordained, or were instructed to ordain, as individuals. They seem to have been selected, by the Apostle Paul, to preside in the ordination of Elders, as persons better instructed than others who were invested with the same office, in the Churches of Ephesus and Crete, and therefore the directions were addressed to them, though by them they were to be communicated to the Churches.—The account given of Timothy's ordination, in the two epistles addressed to him, they think supplies a key to the mode of ordination practised in the primitive church. Timothy was ordained by the laying on of the Apostle Paul's hands.—2 Tim. i. 6. But was the Apostle the only person who ordained Timothy? No. That Apostle presided, but the ordination, as well as the gifts communicated with it, was given with the laying on of the hands of the *Presbytery*. "Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the *hands of the Presbytery*."—1 Tim. iv. 14. Timothy's Ordination, they observe, was therefore ordination by presbyters. There can be no reason to suppose that Titus was ordained in any other manner, or that either of them was to ordain in any other manner, than that in which they themselves had been ordained. They also observe that the Scripture does not represent either of these persons, as Bishops, or Elders of any particular church. The notes added to the second epistle to Timothy and the epistle to Titus, are no part of Scripture, and consequently can be of no use to

determine the question. These two appear to have been Evangelists, who travelled under the direction of the Apostles, sometimes planting churches, sometimes watering them, and reducing those not sufficiently established to correctness and regularity. Evangelists as well as Apostles were extraordinary Ministers, and are mentioned in Eph. iv. 11. In the second epistle to Timothy, written but a little before the Apostle's martyrdom, Titus is said to have left Crete, and to have gone into Dalmatia (ch. iv.) ; and Timothy is recalled from Ephesus, to wait on the Apostle at Rome (v. 9).

In the council at Jerusalem the Apostles and Elders acted with a parity of power, say the advocates of Presbytery and of Independency, which shows that in the exercise of Church Government even the former claimed no superiority.—That Elders, or Presbyters, and Bishops, are only different names for the same office, they think must appear incontrovertible to every unprejudiced mind, from the following declarations. The Elders of the Church of Ephesus, whom the Apostle Paul converted at Miletus, are all of them denominated Bishops, or Overseers, and he affirms that the Holy Ghost had made them such. But if they were all Bishops, or Overseers, this circumstance appears utterly incompatible with the idea of their being under the government of a Diocesan, and shows that Elders and Bishops are convertible terms, and applied to the same office.—Acts, xx. 28. The epistle to the Philippians is thus addressed, “ Paul, and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the Saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the Bishops and Deacons.” In this Church there was a plurality of Bishops, a thing entirely inconsistent with the system of Episcopalians. If

Elders and Bishops be persons of different orders, in this Church there were no Elders; for the Saints, Bishops, and Deacons composed the only characters whom it recognised. But the Apostles commanded Elders to be ordained in every Church.—Acts, xiv. 23.—Titus, i. 5. It is therefore, they say, evident that the Bishops were the Elders of that Church, and were, like the Elders of the Church of Ephesus, from the superintendence they had, styled Bishops, or Overseers. This matter they think is placed beyond debate by the directions given to Titus in which the Apostle represents these as two names for the same office. “For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain *Elders* in every city, as I had appointed thee. If any be blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children, not accused of riot, or unruly: For a *Bishop* must be blameless as the steward of God.”—Titus, i. 5, 6, 7. The Apostle Peter also applies both the epithets to the same persons. “The Elders which are among you, I exhort who am also an Elder.”—“Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof,” that is to say, *discharging the office of Bishops*.

To the arguments from the testimony of the fathers, for the existence of Bishops, as a distinct order from Elders, or Presbyters, and an order superior to them, they reply, that they do not dispute the matter of fact, that some time in the second century, Episcopacy prevailed almost universally, and that Bishops, from that time to the Reformation were considered, as a distinct order from Presbyters, and superior to them.* But, without con-

* See Dr. Hill's Theological Institutes.

troverting the statements, given by early Christian Writers, in proof of the general existence of Episcopacy, which they think would run them into much confusion, as from the interpolations to which many of these writings have been exposed, they are made sometimes not only to contradict one another, but even themselves, they observe that allowing them their full weight, when they have proved the fact, they can prove nothing more. The question must still revert to the institutions of Christianity, as they appear in the infallible oracles of Heaven. The advocates for parity therefore insist on the perfection of the Scriptures. If the Scriptures, say they, are able to do what they claim the power to do, "to make the man of God perfect in every good work," they must necessarily furnish sufficient directions for the government, as well as for the faith of the Church; and they think that removing the cause from a tribunal acknowledged by both parties to be infallible, to one which is acknowledged by both parties to be fallible, has not even the appearance of fairness and impartiality. When they are asked how they can admit the fact without allowing that Episcopacy must have had the approbation of the Apostles, they answer that one of the Apostles records, in his time, the aims of Diotrophes to obtain pre-eminence among the brethren with the most marked disapprobation.—3 John, i. 9.

The argument taken from the name Angels, which is given to those to whom the epistles to the Seven Churches in Asia were directed, they considered as proving nothing more than what is practised almost universally among those who are acknowledged to be equals. Every society, civil and religious, has recourse, for the preservation of order, to the Presidency of one of its body,

who is called the Speaker, the President, the Chairman, or the Moderator, who is particularly addressed in the communications which are to be made to the society over which he presides. They therefore think it much more rational to explain that on which any degree of darkness rests, by what is placed in the clearest light; than to introduce what is dark, for the purpose of destroying what is plain.

Of those who have opposed the claim of Bishops to a rank in the Church, superior to that of Elders, there have been some, who scorning to yield the palm of uncharitableness to such men as Mr. ——— have hastened to a decision equally presumptuous against their opponents. As the latter exclude them from every benefit of Christianity, and leave them nothing for which they can hope, but in common with Heathens, to the uncovenanted mercies of God; *they* have taken care, in *their* turn, to consign Bishops (Prelates) and their advocates to the party of Antichrist. They have represented Popery and Prelacy as nearly allied, and sometimes made them convertible terms. Or, if they have distinguished them, it was by making the one the ape of the other. But these are neither the words of truth nor of soberness, nor can they reflect dishonour upon any persons but those who use them. What! are the doctrines of the everlasting Gospel to be considered as efficacious, and the power of God unto salvation, only to those who have adopted one opinion on the subject of Church Government? Can those who have shone in the Christian firmament, as stars of noble magnitude, who have drawn after them a train of light, and who have turned many to righteousness, be ranked with the enemies of our God and our Saviour? Such many Bishops certainly

were, during the first ages of Christianity. That mode of Church Government which generally obtained in the ages next to that of the Apostles, though not entitled from this circumstance alone to command our implicit assent, has certainly a claim to rank with something of a better origin, than the Antichristian system. If, in modern times, there are instances of this order having been sullied by the unhallowed conduct, by the pride, the intolerance, the superstition, the bigotry, the worldly-mindedness, of those who have borne its distinctions, only that they might sink its honours, has it not also been adorned by the fervent piety, by the profound learning, by the deep researches, by the moderation, by the charity, and by the mild virtues and the soft lustre shed on the Church of Christ by the lives of those who have occupied, filled, and ordained, that post? Into what annals of spotless fame shall we look for characters more venerable, for men more devoted to God, or more alive to the best interests of their fellow creatures, than were Latimer, Cranmer, Leighton, Fox, Beddle, Wilson, Hopkins, Butler, and many others whose names are written in the purest page of Church History; and many of whose works are likely to survive every wreck, but that of time itself. To the pious and candid Christian, whose sentiments are far from being in unison with theirs, on the subject of Church Government, and some other points nearly connected with it, this memory of these excellent men will ever present itself with reverence and veneration. Let the man who professes himself the advocate of truth, always hold and speak it in love, and let him always remember, that zeal and fury are as distant as Heaven and Hell, and that intemperate heat disgraces, not only the advocate, but the cause he pleads.

Presbyterians and Independents have no sooner finished their combined attack upon Episcopacy, than they find themselves ready to engage in opposite lists, and to take the field against each other. Here, too, the controversy becomes more intricate, and the spirit of mutual hostility, if possible, more enraged. If the weapons to which they appeal, present not a keener edge, the wounds they inflict are more fatal, because they are poisoned. These observations apply both to the recent disputes that have called forth the energies of both parties in Scotland, and to the controversies agitated between them in the times of Cromwell.

Presbyterians contend against the Independents for these three things:—First. For Courts of Appeal and Review, to the decisions of which the various congregations and individuals of which the Church is composed are amenable, and to whose decisions, according to the word of God, they are to submit.—Second. The formation of these Courts they contend is by Representation.—Third. They contend that Ruling Elders constitute a part of those who bear offices of power in the Church of Christ.—Presbyterian Congregations have a Congregational Government, as well as those called Independents, though differently composed. The first is composed wholly of the Rulers; the second, that of the Independents, is composed of the Rulers and of all the private individuals who are members of the Society. Beyond this, Independency acknowledges no authority whatsoever. Presbyterians, considering all who believe the doctrines, and obey the precepts of the Gospel, as the members of one great body, provide for the protection and government of its component parts, by one General Council, or Assembly. The intervening

Courts, Presbyteries, and Provincial Synods, are expedients to prevent the necessity of having too frequent recurrence to General Convocations, and to decide those points which admit of a more easy, or which require a more speedy determination.

The first step that Presbyterians take to prove that Courts of Appeal and Review have the sanction of Scripture, is, by observing that the Church of Jerusalem consisted of more congregations than one, and that these were under one Presbyterian Government. That the Church of Jerusalem consisted of more Congregations than one, they think evident from the number of Christians in that city. On the day of Pentecost, says the sacred Historian, "the same day there were added unto them, about three thousand souls."—Acts, ii. 41. After this mighty influx of converts we are told (v. 47), "The Lord added to the Church daily such as should be saved." In the fourth chapter of the Acts, we are told, after the account given of a Sermon preached by the Apostle Peter, that "many of them which heard the word believed; and the number of the men was about five thousand."—v. 4. The number last added to the Church, they think from the narration, was exclusive of the former, and that, consequently, including the disciples whose conversion was the first fruits of the labours of our Saviour, of his Apostles, and of the Seventy, nearly nine thousand men were in the fellowship of the Church at Jerusalem. As the Evangelists in giving the numbers of men concerned in any transaction, generally do not include those of the other sex who were present, they think they cannot consistently be supposed to include them in these accounts. Compare Math. xiv. 21, with John, vi. 10, and with Acts, i. 14. In almost every

period of the Church, the number of the female sex has exceeded that of the males.—In the fifth chapter of the Acts, we read that “Believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women.”—v. 14. In the sixth chapter we are told “The word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith.”—v. 7. In the fifth chapter, we find the Apostles charged by the High Priest before the Council with “having *filled* Jerusalem with their doctrine.”—v. 28. The persecution which followed the martyrdom of Stephen, appears to have dispersed a considerable part of the Church of Jerusalem, though from the account given of it, the dispersion appears to have been principally, if not wholly, of the Ministers of the Gospel. “They that were scattered went every where preaching the word.” Of every obnoxious party, the leaders are the men marked out for the first sacrifice. After the persecution raised by Herod, of which the Apostle James was the victim, the sacred Historian informs us, that “The word of God grew and multiplied.” In the twenty first chapter of the Acts, we have an account of the interview that Paul had with James, and with all the Elders, in which they point out to him the vast numbers of which the Church was composed. “Thou seest, brother, how many thousands” (myriads or tens of thousands) “of Jews there are which believe.”—v. 20. Supposing that the word myriads, (say the advocates of Presbyterian Government), a definite, should here be put for an indefinite number, it is evident that it must mean many thousands. To diminish them to a smaller number is to sink the language of Scripture, and to reduce the dew of the Saviour’s youth which

was from the womb of the morning, to a few scanty drops. Thirty or forty thousand, including females, seem rather to be a number that falls short of the probable one, than an account that has the appearance of exaggeration : if we consider, that the population of Jerusalem was at least equal to that of London, and that there the *rod of the Redeemer's strength* was wielded with so powerful an arm, that thousands were repeatedly converted by single sermons.

As the Church of Jerusalem was for some years the only Christian society in the world, it had appropriated to it the labours of the twelve Apostles, of the seventy Disciples, of many Prophets, and many Elders. The highest order of these Ministers, (and we cannot suppose that the rest of them were unemployed), were so immersed in the labour of preaching, that they were obliged to institute an inferior one for the purpose of superintending the temporal affairs of the Church. Upon the whole, Presbyterians think it demonstrable that the number of Christians in Jerusalem rendered it impossible for them, without a continued miracle, to assemble in one congregation to hear the doctrines of Christianity preached, or to join in the celebration of Divine worship. Had there been only one assembly, the Apostles and other preachers of Christianity, instead of having their time filled up, and their talents employed in the ministry of the word, must have had few opportunities for calling these talents into action. Their gifts must have been bound up, and lain dormant.

That there was a plurality of congregations in Jerusalem, they think appears also evident from the diversity of languages spoken by the followers of Jesus, who resided in that city. In the second chapter of the Acts,

we read of devout Jews, from a variety of nations, who were converted by the ministry of the Apostles, hearing these Messengers speak the wonderful works of God in their own languages. In the sixth chapter, we are told of a murmuring which arose among the Grecians against the Hebrews. The former Jews were called *Grecians* because being born, or being educated in Greece, they were strangers to the language used in Judea, and employed that in the knowledge of which they were disciplined. To communion in worship, and to instruction in the doctrines of religion, a common language is absolutely necessary, in every congregation. The diversities of language therefore imposed the necessity of different congregations. Though a Roman Catholic may be satisfied with devotions expressed in a language of which he knows nothing, the religion of the first Christians was a reasonable service.

It is evident, say the advocates of Presbyterian Government, that though there were several congregations in Jerusalem, they were under one Ecclesiastical Government, for they are never called the Churches, but always the Church in Jerusalem, or the whole Church in it. In the Acts of the Apostles, it appears on the face of the account, that there was a General Court, composed of the Apostles and Elders of the whole Church. This Court ordained the Deacons, and received and distributed the contributions (Acts, xi. 30), which were sent by the brethren at Antioch, for the relief of their poor saints. The same Court decided upon the reference which was made to them by the Church at Antioch.—Acts, xv. When the Apostle Paul arrived at Jerusalem he found this Court sitting. He went in unto James; and all the Elders were present.—Acts, xxi. 18. The whole congregation of

Israel, is in the Acts, called one Church (vii. 38), though it included nearly two millions, who assembled in different synagogues for the purpose of social worship, because they were all subject to one common government.

To the reasoning by which the Presbyterians think they have proved a diversity of congregations in Jerusalem, if not in the more early period of that Church, yet, in the progress it is represented as having made, before its history is concluded in the Acts of the Apostles, Mr. Carson, in his answer to Mr. Brown's Vindication of the Presbyterian Form of Church Government, thus replies: "Now, Sir, from the name by which they are called, and from the unvaried tenor of their history, in the Acts of the Apostles, it appears most evident that the Disciples at Jerusalem formed only one congregation. Is there a single passage in all the history in which they are said, or supposed, either expressly or by implication, to have been divided into distinct congregations? If there were really a difficulty as to their numbers, a difficulty can never destroy a fact, far less be the foundation of an opposite system, as you attempt to make it. When I have shown, from the plain meaning of the word Church, and the plain declaration of Scripture, that they all met in one place, you cannot invalidate the fact, or make it in the least suspicious, by any thing but an insuperable objection.—Your objection, however, at its utmost amount, is not insuperable, and I defy you to show them positively at any one time to have exceeded five thousand. Suppose it is said, that they were on such a day five thousand, and that on the very next five thousand were converted, I am not necessarily obliged to give you credit for ten thousand. There is a possibility that most of the first five thousand might have died, or emigrated. I do not

say it is probable, but all I have to do is to show that it is possible."*

The decree of the Council of Jerusalem, which is represented as made to bind the whole Church, and which is recorded in the fifteenth chapter of the Acts, is considered by Presbyterians as utterly subversive of the plea for the independency of every congregation on the collective decisions of the Church. The Independents represent the decision of that Council as the decision of an inspired and infallible Court, upon a subject on which the appeal had been made to them by the Church of Antioch, in that character alone. Both Presbyterians and Independents allow the decision to have been agreeable to the will of God, and to have been binding on the whole Church; but if that Council was not inspired, here is a precedent of powerful energy in favour of Courts of Appeal, which constitute an essential part of Presbyterian Government. If, on the other hand, that Court was an assembly of inspired men, as no such Court now exists, the arguments of the Presbyterians from this passage of Scripture fall to the ground. Both parties, therefore, here call to their aid every auxiliary argument, to labour their opposite points. The Presbyterians contend, that the Elders, who were ordinary ministers of Christianity, and not inspired, were constituent members of this assembly, and acted with the same power as the Apostles; and that, therefore, the decision did not proceed from the inspiration of the Court, but from its competency to decide with judgment and propriety, the question at issue between Paul and Barnabas on one hand, and the false

* Letters to Mr. Brown. Letter 8, p. 261, 262.

teachers at Antioch, on the other. In Paul and Barnabas, they observe, inspiration was at hand, and had the controversy been to have been decided by it, there would have been no necessity of going to Jerusalem at all. The dictate of inspiration by two of the chief Apostles, could not be at variance with the dictate of inspiration in the other Apostles. Presbyterians also argue, that the language used by the sacred Historian sufficiently shows, that the members of the Court met with the expectation of a proper decision, from the exercise of their judgment, in a dependence on the ordinary influences of the Spirit, and not from immediate revelation. "The Apostles and Elders came together for to *consider* this matter."—Acts, xv. 6. The manner in which the subject was treated, they also contend, clearly proves that the members of the Court were not under any infallible influence, for they were at first far from being unanimous in their opinions. There had been *much disputing* (v. 7); and the words of Peter—"Why tempt ye God to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?" sufficiently prove that, in the assembly, there had been advocates for a sentence, the opposite of that which was finally given. The matter was decided by the luminous reasoning of Peter, of Paul, of Barnabas, and of James, on the combined evidence of prophecy, miracles, and facts. "Then pleased it the Apostles and Elders with the whole Church, &c."—v. 22.

In opposition to these arguments, the Independents insist, that as the Apostles were all of them infallible, in the doctrines they taught, and as the decision was to be a rule both of faith and practice to the Church, it was necessary that the members should have the same certainty of inspiration, as of the authority of the decree, other-

wise their faith must have stood in the wisdom of men, and not in the power of God. "If there was one inspired man in the assembly, the infallibility of the decision is completely secured. But if there was a real difficulty in reconciling the inspiration of the Apostles, with the co-operation of uninspired Elders, there is a necessity rather to suppose the inspiration of the latter, than the fallibility of the former."*

The second peculiarity of the Presbyterian system, is Government by representation. No very numerous or widely extended society, say its advocates, can easily be brought together; and, even when they are collected, it is in vain to hope that we shall find them capable of calm discussion, and of judicious determination. From such a convention we have to expect, not the tempered wisdom of a regular assembly, divested of prejudice and passion, but the hurry, the bustle, the tumult, the impetuosity of an Ephesian mob, or of a Polish Diet. The excellency of this branch of government in human legislation, will be readily acknowledged by every friend of science and of liberty. This argument, however, will not be considered as giving a sufficient sanction to its being grafted into the Church of God, by those who regard Church Government as a Divine Institution. They will be satisfied with no argument but that which rests on the precepts of Christianity, or, on the example of the Apostolic Churches. Independents charge Presbyterians with forming their ideas, on this subject, from the history of modern human systems, and not from the chartered rights of the Church of Christ. "Where," says Mr. Carson, "do you

* Mr. Carson's Letters to Mr. Brown. Letter 10, p. 516.

find any Church Assembly composed of Representatives? Can you produce any example, or any precept? Is there any thing like it in the fifteenth chapter of the Acts? The idea of Representation never occurred to any man from this narrative itself; it has been taken from the systems of Civil Government and transferred to Religion. Like every other distinguishing part of your system, it is a child of human wisdom."*

To these objections Presbyterians reply, by referring Independents to the election of the Seven Deacons, recorded in the sixth chapter of the Acts, and the purpose for which they were elected. "Then the twelve called the multitude of the Disciples unto them, and said, It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables. Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you, seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business."—v. 2, 3. The obvious idea of representation, say they, consists in one man's being invested with the right to act for another. For what purpose were the Seven Deacons chosen? To be set over the whole stock of the Church's property. For whom were they invested with a right to act? For the whole Church. And by whom were they ordained by prayer and the imposition of hands, to that solemn trust? By the Apostles. They insist, therefore, that the first act of the Christian Church in choosing its officers, sanctions and even consecrates the idea of Church Officers as the Representatives of the Church. The happiest consequences, they observe, followed the ordination of men, who were

* Mr. Carson's Letters to Mr. Brown, p. p. 474—76.

solemnly invested with power to represent the Church "And the word of God increased, &c."—v. 7. Let the reason also, say they, or rather the necessity of such an appointment, be well considered. It was the incapacity of a numerous assembly to act with sufficient impartiality, discernment, and harmony, in the management of the Church's bounty: and if such an assembly could not discharge with sufficient 'impartiality, discernment, and harmony, such an office, how much more unfit were they to act as dispensers of the sacred laws, by which the Church was regulated. But though they were utterly unqualified to act themselves, as all large bodies must ever be, they were well qualified to do what the Apostles required them to do. "Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men, &c." From that publicity of character, which wisdom and goodness generally stamp on those by whom they are eminently possessed, the members of every Church are well qualified to select their representatives, and in the choice they make they are seldom wrong, when the motives that influence them are pure and right. In the election of the Seven Deacons, Presbyterians consider their system of representation as irrefragably established, and they insist that though those officers were elected for a particular purpose, they were as completely the Representatives of the Church, and chosen by the Church to act for them in that character, as ever the members returned to Parliament, by any County or Borough in Britain, were the Representatives of their Electors.

In the third place, Presbyterians contend for the order of Ruling Elders, as constituent members of those Church Courts by which the laws of Christianity are to be dispensed. By Ruling Elders, Presbyterians mean an order

of men whose office it is to be associated, in the Government of the Church, with those who are called Pastors, Elders, or Bishops; who labour in word and in doctrine, but who, though participating with the latter in the administration of the laws of the Church, are not invested with a commission to preach the Gospel. For this reason they have often been called Lay-Elders, to distinguish them from those Elders in whom the offices of ruling and preaching are combined. Presbyterians observe that the Apostle Paul, in the twelfth chapter of his epistle to the Romans (v. 7, 8), having called Ministers to a sedulous attention to the duty of ministering, and those whose office it was to exhort, to wait on exhortation, him that giveth (the Deacon whose office it was to distribute the bounty of the Church) to do it with simplicity, adds, "he that ruleth, with diligence." From this they argue that an order is here recognized, distinguished from that of Pastors on the one hand, and from that of Deacons on the other. From the first, by their not being Ministers of the Gospel; from the last, by the office of ruling. They further observe, that the same Apostle in his first epistle to the Corinthians, twelfth chapter, v. 28, mentions Helps (*Deacons*), and immediately after, *Governments*, as officers appointed by God in the Christian Church. To no office but to that of Ruling Elders, say they, can this description be applied. To Pastors it cannot properly be applied, because it expresses but one part of their office; but of a Ruling Elder it is an accurate and full definition; Government being his particular business. Presbyterians consider the arguments taken from these two declarations of Scripture, as established still more firmly by the prescription of the same Apostle, in his first epistle to Timothy, fifth

chapter, v. 17, "Let the Elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine." Here, say they, are two classes of Elders mentioned, "one who only ruled, but as they ruled well were worthy of double honour. Another who ruled well, and who also laboured in word and doctrine; and who especially were worthy of double honour. They observe that notwithstanding the expedients which ingenuity has contrived to secure an escape from the force of this text, several of the most respectable advocates, both for Episcopacy, and for Independency, have acknowledged it as decisive on this point. Of the advocates for the former, Mr. Brown has brought the testimony of Dr. Whitby, and that of Mr. Whittaker.* Dr. Owen, a most respectable writer of the Independent school, speaking of 1 Tim. v. 17, observes, "On the first proposal of this text *that the Elders who rule well are worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine*, a rational man who is unprejudiced, who never heard of the controversy about Ruling Elders, can hardly avoid an apprehension that there are two sorts of Elders, some that labour in the word and doctrine, and some who do not so labour. The truth is, it was interest and prejudice that first caused some learned men to strain their wits to find out evasions from the evidence of this testimony; being so found, some others of meaner abilities, have been entangled by them."†

* Mr. Brown's Vindication of the Presbyterian Form of Church Government. Letter 11, p. p. 177, 178.

† Nature and Government of the Gospel Church, p. 246.

Presbyterians contend, that the plurality of Elders who were ordained by the Apostles in every Church, is a strong argument to prove the existence of Lay-Elders in the Apostolic Churches. That some of the Churches planted by the Apostles were sufficiently numerous to employ the labours of more Ministers than one, is not improbable; but by much the greater part of the Christian Societies mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles, appear to have been much smaller than many of those among ourselves, who have the ordinances of Christianity regularly dispensed to them, by the ministry of one Pastor. But how small soever those Churches were, all of them had a plurality of Elders. It was a maxim laid down by our Saviour, and enforced by his Apostles, that they who preach the Gospel, should live by the Gospel. He who gives himself to prayer, and to the ministry of the word, has the strongest claim to have his wants supplied by those for whom, and with whom, he prays, and to whom he ministers. Many of the Apostolical Churches, the members of which were generally poor, were scarcely equal to the support of one Minister of the Gospel, and to load them with the support of a plurality of Ministers, whose services were unnecessary to their spiritual comfort, would have been an oppressive burden. But all Churches require government as well as the preaching of the word, and though the latter may be safely committed to *one*, Presbyterians argue that the liberty of Christian societies requires that the former should be entrusted to a *plurality* of Elders. The exercise of Government being only occasional, is, in ordinary circumstances, perfectly compatible with the prosecution of those professions, or trades, to which those who only rule have been educated; and consequently left no claim to draw on the Church

for the duties it discharged. Extraordinary occasions, which called for supernumerary services, that might intercept the regular returns of industry, or that exposed to incidental expenses, and so required remuneration, formed exceptions to the general rule. Though Presbyterians rest this part, as well as the other parts of their system, upon what appears to them the authority of Scripture, they consider the office of Ruling Elders as opposing the most effectual restraints that can be opposed, to the absolute power of the clergy. The love of power is natural to all men, and the corruption of human nature disposes all men to abuse it. "Every man," says a profound and masterly writer, "pushes on till he comes to something that limits him.—To prevent the abuse of power, it is necessary that, by the very disposition of things, power should be a check to power."* It is this check which forms the superlative excellence of the political constitution of Britain, and, in approaching it as nearly as the difference of their circumstances would admit, the wisdom of the United States of America has shone with distinguished lustre. These are the only two Governments in the world that have political liberty for their foundation. Of despotic power the same writer has given us a just and awful picture. "When the savages of Louisiana are desirous of fruit, they cut the tree to the root, and gather the fruit."† Never did the annals of political despotism present to the mind a picture more justly descriptive of the wretched state of the laity, for ages before the Reformation, by the oppression of the clergy, than that which is exhibited by the image of a tree cut down for the sake of gathering its fruits.

* Spirit of Laws, Vol. 1, Book 11, Chap. 4. † Book 5, Chap. 13.

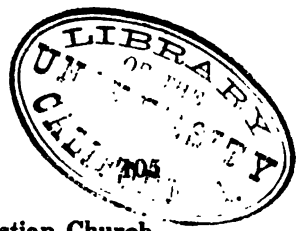
Mr. Brown observes, that to the discontinuance of the separate class of rulers (Ruling Elders), the gradual progress of Ecclesiastical tyranny, that laid prostrate at its feet the liberties of the Church, and trampled them in the dust, is in a great measure to be ascribed. To prove the fact, he quotes an ample confession of it from the writer of the Commentaries, commonly ascribed to Ambrose. "Wherefore," says this writer, "both the synagogue, and afterwards the Church, had Elders, without whose counsel nothing was done in the Church; which order, grew into disuse, by what negligence I know not, unless perhaps by the sloth, or rather by the pride of the teachers, while they alone wish to appear something." To prove the existence of this order in the primitive Church, the same writer has brought various testimonies from the fathers.* How venerable soever the character of the Ministers of Christianity may be found, and how salutary soever their influence has been known when their power flows in the channel that has been marked out for it, it needs mounds and banks to restrain its impetuosity, and to curb its violence, for they are men of like passions with others.

Presbyterians may be ranked into two classes. The first are such as believe, that the great lines of their system are drawn, with marked decision in the word of God, and are designed for the perpetual direction of the Church in all the ages of the world; and this is unquestionably the doctrine taught in the Form of Church Government, agreed upon by the Assembly of Divines at Westminster, and approved by the Church of Scotland.—Other Presby-

* Brown's Vindication, &c. Letter 11, p. p. 188, 191.

terians consider this Form of Church Government as more consonant than either Episcopacy or Independency, to that which, according to the infallible records, existed in the primitive Church. Though they do not contend for it as of universal and indispensable obligation, they consider it as a wise and salutary regulation, to provide for the regular administration of the laws of Christianity, guarded against tyranny and usurpation on the one hand, and against anarchy and confusion on the other. Though many Presbyterians have not been sparing in intemperate and uncandid reflections on the friends of opposite systems, and especially on those of Episcopacy, none of them, so far as we know, have ever directly approached to that abominable spirit of bigotry, which confines the blessings of Divine grace to the ordinances dispensed among themselves. In the Form of Church Government, and of Ordination of Ministers by the Westminster Assembly, Episcopal ordination is held to be valid, and not to be disclaimed by any who have received it.

The doctrine of the Independents, with respect to Church Government, consists in two propositions. The first is, that every congregation is in itself a complete Church, having a full and perfect government in itself, and accountable to no human authority whatsoever. The second is, that in every such society, the whole body of the faithful are entitled to claim a share in its government, and a voice in all its regulations. In both of these propositions they are directly at issue with the Presbyterians, and also with the friends of Episcopacy. Here the old alliance between the former parties expires, and those who formerly were friends fast sworn, part in acrimonious dispute. To the first proposition of the Independents, Episcopalians and Presbyterians object, that



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it completely destroys that union of the Christian Church, which consists in her perfect organization, as the members of one body, by breaking her down into an infinite number of small societies, insulated from one another; and thus necessarily prevents that subservience of the parts to the good of the whole, and that mutual co-operation in which only the strength and perfection of any association can be found. They argue from the representations given in Scripture of the Church, as constituting *one great whole*, one regular and *closely united society*. It is, say they, compared to an olive tree (Rom. xi.), from which some branches (the Jews) were broken off, and the Gentiles who are compared to a wild olive, grafted on among the remaining branches, to partake with them of the fatness of the olive tree. It is also represented under the metaphor of a body, all the parts of which being fitly compacted together, by that which every joint supplies, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, make increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love. These and other such images, they think can never apply to the most numerous societies of men, crumbled into independent, solitary particles, so far at least as to have no bond of union. They consider a human body dissected, of which all the parts are separated from the trunk, and from one another, as a correct representation of Independency. To these representations Independents reply, that "The union of Christians in the same particular Church, is not pointed out by their being under the same Government and Governors. This is represented by their union in ordinances, especially in the Lord's supper.—1 Cor. x. 17. The singleness of the body is represented by their participation of the one bread. The circumstance of their being under a

common Government is not even taken into the account. Besides, though all the congregations in the world were independent, there not only *may*, but if they are Christians and act as such, there certainly *will* be among them the strictest union, both external and internal. This may not appear to the carnal eye ; but it is not on that account the less real. Like the Apostolical Churches, they would mutually receive each other in the arms of Christian love, because Christ has received them, and forward the business of brethren personally strangers to them, even in temporal matters. A Church at the North Pole would receive a brother, upon his letter of introduction from his Church, in the opposite extremity of the earth. Is there no union among the children of the same father, though they are scattered in different kingdoms?"*

Both Episcopallans and Presbyterians also object, that by the constitution of Independent Churches it is impossible, in many cases, to provide for the equal and candid administration of justice. Suppose, say they, that an individual, or a number of individuals, in such a congregation, through the influence of local prejudices and those animosities which often operate, in a contracted circle, even upon the minds of good men, should unjustly be expelled the communion of that Church, of which he formerly was a member, or they formerly were members, what redress can possibly be hoped for ? The Church is independent and amenable to no superior court on earth. To the man who is a member of such a society, that privilege, the sweetest fruit that grows on the tree of British Liberty, of appealing from a contract-

* Mr. Carson's Reply to Mr. Brown's Vindication, p. p. 218—14.

ed and bigoted circle, to a tribunal more noble and candid—his lips must never hope to taste. Should the Church be divided, as that at Corinth was, into different parties, there is no composing hand, no power that can judge between them, and pronounce, upon a review of the dispute, who is in the right, and who is in the wrong. Besides, say they, such a society is, in its government, cut off from every benefit it might derive from the piety, from the talents, and from the prudence of those who stand on higher ground in the Church of Christ. It is in religion, what a village would be with respect to the comforts and enjoyments of life, were it separated from the circulation of benefits which it receives from its connexion with the empire.

These objections however must lose much of their force when applied to those who admit of Courts of Review: the propriety, and even the necessity of which was admitted by the Old Independents, by Dr. Owen, by Messrs. Hooker, Cotton, Goodwin, and the Westminster Independents, and also by those in Holland. Associations which have something of this, or of a similar kind, are very common among the English Independents; and though there is certainly some difference between their system and that of the Presbyterians, there is a marked opposition in the former to that which is adopted by the Scotch Independents. The latter Independents reject all associations for the purpose of counsel and advice, as well as for authoritative determination. Mr. Brown has brought forward the substance of the arguments we have briefly stated against the Independents, and Mr. Carson in his answer to that gentleman's performance, has made strong replies to them. Presbyterians charge Independents with a tendency to encourage a schismatic spirit,

in matters the most trivial, and as calculated to give great facility for the introduction both of error and of tyranny, compared with the system which they adopt. Independents deny that either of these consequences follow from their Church Government, and undertake to fix them as the inseparable attendants of that of their opponents.

The second position of the Independents is, that in every congregation, the whole individuals who compose it are entitled to a share in the Government, and a voice in all its regulations. Independents allow the right of their Pastor to preside in the meetings of their Churches; to preserve order; to prepare the business which is to be the subject of discussion, and to state his own sentiments: but in the determination of it, he has no more power than any other member of the congregation. To this Presbyterians object, that many persons have a right to be numbered with the Church of Christ, who in Grace are but babes and children, and who by this scheme are placed on a footing with such as are fathers; that upon such principles, no family could be wisely and well governed, much less can provision be made for the extended and combined interests of a religious society. Men, say they, whose natural faculties are extremely weak, and who have possessed few advantages for the cultivation of the slender powers they possess, in that season of life when they are most susceptible of it; and whose employments allow them little time for intellectual improvement, in more advanced life, are utterly unqualified for ruling in the Church of Christ.—They further observe, that these arguments derive greater force when they are transferred from these times, and from the country in which we live, to the Churches in an earlier period of

the world, or in a situation less favourable to improvement. During the first ages of the Church of Christ, general knowledge was far from existing in that improved and advanced state, to which it has now arrived in Britain. Before the invention of printing, copies of the Scriptures were possessed by but a small number of Christians.—Should the Gospel be propagated among the Hottentots (we have reason to bless God that supposition is now realized), or in any other country on which the cloud of ignorance had sat so thick and deep, they ask, could we reasonably suppose that every person fit to be admitted to the communion of a Church, was also fit to be introduced to act as a ruler, and to decide upon every question of doctrine or of government? This, however, they say, the system of Independency supposes him to be. They observe that the force of these objections appears to have struck the mind of a strenuous, though very respectable advocate for Independency, and to have drawn from him the following confession. “Nothing again,” says he, “is less likely to serve the cause of truth, or even the cause of Christian liberty, than making every thing that ought to be done, wait for discussion in full assembly. If the Church contains the collective wisdom, it contains also the collective ignorance of the brethren; if it combines their gifts and their grace, it combines also their infirmities and corruption. Where every thing must undergo discussion, some may be in danger of thinking that they have laws to make, instead of laws to obey. A few of the most active spirits and readiest elocution, will become the real movers and managers in every business; and a part will thus be put for the whole. When they are agreed, every thing must be complied with; when they are at variance, every thing must be

objected to. *No tyranny is so bad as that of a cabal*; that is, of those who are uppermost for the moment in the fermentation of anarchy. In short, those who most need restraint, are, by such means, in danger of being led to set it at defiance; while the peaceful, and those to whom the Government is committed nominally, are terrified and chained down by the turbulence of the rest."*

To the objections stated, Mr. Carson makes the following reply, in his second letter to Mr. Brown. "In the Church of Christ there are no laws to make, and none of those intricate and perplexed questions handled in the Presbyterian Courts, ever come before them. All they have to do is to judge of the application of the laws of Christ, and for this, all Christians have spiritual wisdom. From the least to the greatest of them they are all taught of God. 'The law of the Lord is perfect, *making wise the simple*.' If Church members did not understand the laws of Christ, they would be as unfit to obey them, as to judge when they were applicable. Indeed, Sir, there are many acquainted, with almost no book but the Bible, who discover much more knowledge of the kingdom of Christ, and even more sound sense than others who can quote a farrago of authors, and who never look into the Scriptures, but through the medium of their works.—I ask you, Sir, as Paul does the Corinthians, do you not know that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by them, are they unworthy to judge the smallest matters? It requires no great mental culture to judge of every matter that comes before a

* Mr. Ewing's Lecture upon Acts, xv. p. 35.

Church of Christ. Common sense is sufficient to judge of the proof of a brother's offence, whether it be drunkenness, swearing, covetousness, &c., or the breach of any positive law, and a spiritual understanding will enable them to discover, whether he is to be deemed an hypocrite, or has been overtaken in a fault.*

To that principle of independency, which acknowledges the equal right of all the members of a congregation to take a direct part in its government, it is further objected, that it stands evidently opposed to the distinction which the Scripture makes between those who are rulers, and those who are ruled ; and to that submissive obedience, and honour, which it claims from the latter to the former. "Salute all them that have the rule over you," says Paul in his epistle to the Heb. xiii. 24. In his first epistle to Timothy, Paul requires that a Bishop rule well his own family, having his children in subjection with all gravity, and gives this as the reason, that if he know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the Church of God ? An argument which evidently proves that Bishops are to govern the house of God.—chap. iii. 4, 5. To this statement, Independents reply, that they allow the distinction between Rulers and Church Members, but they insist that whatever is done by those who are appointed to rule, be done in the presence, and with the consent of the general body. "Every member is indeed bound to judge in all matters that come before the Church ; none however are rulers but the Elders. Is there no difference between judging of the application of a law, and executing that law ?

* Mr. Ewing's Lecture upon Acts, p. p. 52, 54.

Church Members then are not Church Rulers, those only excepted who are appointed to the office of Elders.”*

The Independents contend for the right of Church members in general to claim a share in its government, from the representation given in the fifteenth chapter of the Acts, of the procedure of the Assembly at Jerusalem. We are told that “it pleased the Apostles and Elders with the *whole Church*, to send chosen men of their company to Antioch, with Paul and Barnabas,” and they wrote a letter by them in this manner, “The Apostles, and Elders, and Brethren, send greeting unto the brethren which are of the Gentiles, in Antioch, and Syria, and Cilicia, &c.” Now, they say, the *whole Church*, as well as the Apostles and Elders, are represented as sending chosen men, or in other words, as taking an active and decisive part in the whole of this transaction; and consequently as both claiming and exercising a right to judge and to act in the government of the Church. In the letter sent to the Churches, the decision is called that of the Brethren, as well as that of the Apostles and Elders.

To this argument Mr. Brown replies. “The Apostles and Elders might determine that two of the brethren should go up to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas, to testify the acquiescence of the whole in the decision, and might call upon the multitude, as at the election of their Deacons, to look out from among themselves two men for this purpose. Upon their complying with the request, and choosing from among themselves Judas and Silas, it might directly be said, that it pleased them as well as the

* Mr. Ewing's Lecture upon Acts, p. 35.

Apostles and Elders to send their brethren to the Church at Antioch ; while yet, agreeably to the history, they neither publicly judged nor voted in the matter. It seems plain that it might be represented as pleasing the members, if they be referred to, only so far as *acquiescing* in the decision, which was made by the Apostles and Elders, and not as themselves joining judicially in the deliberation and determination ; and that it is in this view that their names are inserted in the letters. The reference was not made to them, and would they ever have presumed to judge in a cause, in which they were not appealed to ? They are never named among those who came together to consider the matter, and can we suppose that, if they did not meet either for deliberation or decision, they determined in this cause, either *virtually* or *ostensibly*, as ecclesiastical judges ? Besides, when the sacred Historian speaks of the decision which was contained in these letters, and of the persons who passed it as ecclesiastical judges, he affirms, as has been said repeatedly, that it was pronounced only by Apostles and Elders."—ch. xvi. 4.*

Independents consider the reproof given to the Church of Corinth (1 Cor. v. 2), for not pronouncing sentence against the incestuous person, as a sufficient evidence that the government of the Church was lodged, not in a Presbytery, but with the whole collective body. Mr. Cotton, in his book entitled "The Keys of the Kingdom," p. p. 44, 45, 46, observes, in the first place, "That the reproof for not proceeding to a sentence against the incestuous person, is directed to the whole, as well as to the

* Mr. Brown's Eighth Letter.

Presbytery. They are all blamed, not mourning, &c. Secondly. They are *all* commanded, when they are gathered together, to proceed against him.—1 Cor. v. 4, 5. In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, to deliver such an one unto Satan. And again in v. 13, ‘Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person.’ In the Third place, He declares this act of theirs in putting him away, to be a *judicial* act; for says he (v. 12), ‘do not ye judge them that are within?’ And Fourthly, Upon his exhibiting evidence of his repentance, the Apostle enjoins the brethren at large, as well as the Elders, to forgive him.” 2 Cor. ii. 4—10.

Mr. Brown’s reply to this argument, which he acknowledges to be much more plausible than any thing he had met in Goodwin, Owen, Glass, or many other of the Independents, is by much too long to admit of being inserted here; we shall, however, select a few of his observations. He observes “that they are not commanded to mourn, that *they themselves had not taken him away*, but simply that as *the consequence of their sorrow*, stirring up their Elders to a sense of their duty, he *might be taken away from them*, is it not plain that this passage, instead of favouring the principles of Independency, seems fairly to establish the very opposite, and that the power of discipline is vested in the Elders, and not in the members of the Church? Nor will the command of Paul to the Corinthians, to deliver up the incestuous person to Satan, when they were gathered together, and to put away from themselves that wicked person, with his declaration, that they had a power to judge them that are within, suffice to prove that the members at large exercised a similar power with those who were their

rulers, in administering the government of that Christian Church. That they are susceptible of this interpretation, if viewed in themselves, without attending to other passages of scripture, I readily grant. But nothing is more common than to represent a thing as done by a body at large, while it is done only by those, in that body, to whom it is competent. Thus we are informed in Scripture that the great city, Rome, reigned over the kings of the Earth (Rev. xvii. 18), while yet we know, that the world was governed at the period referred to, not by the citizens of Rome, but by the Emperor and Senate; and thus nothing is more frequent, both in speech and writing, than to say, that the people of Great Britain govern their American Colonies, while it is only the King and Parliament who thus govern them. Are not the Jews in general often reproved by the Prophets (see Jer. v. 28, and vi. 5) for most flagrant violations of equity, in the public administration of justice, as well as for other crimes, which could be committed only by their rulers? But who would imagine from this, that every Israelite was a *civil judge*, or that it was not the Rulers alone who were responsible for these crimes: and that notwithstanding the general expressions which are employed, that the people were only accessory to the guilt, in as far as they approved of their conduct, and did not witness against it? Besides, is it not, notwithstanding, undeniable, that these passages as plainly and expressly enjoin *every Israelite* to administer public justice with fidelity and impartiality, as the Apostle tells the members of the Church in Corinth, that they might judge them who were within their communion, and might put away from among themselves wicked persons?

“Though it should be admitted that the sentence, as we are told (2 Cor. ii. 6), was *inflicted* by many, it will not follow that it was *passed* by many, or by all of them, for there is an essential distinction in every Government between the *making* and the *infliction* of a sentence. The former might be performed only by a *few* who were Rulers, while the latter might be executed by all the members of the Church, who were bound to concur with the Elders, by inflicting the sentence; and who were all, as we have said, under an obligation to refuse to have fellowship with him, that he might be ashamed and that others might fear.—All that can be deduced from their being commanded to forgive their offending brother (2 Cor. ii. 7, 10) is, that as they all had been offended by him in their *various stations*, they were all to forgive upon token of his repentance, and to express their forgiveness in a manner which was suited to their situations in the Church. Those who were Rulers, and were offended by him in that capacity, were commanded *as such*, to forgive him, and restore him again to the privileges of their society: and those who were members and had been offended by him, *as such*, on account of the dishonour which he had done to God, were called *as such*, to express their forgiveness and to restore him once more to the comforts and advantages of private fellowship. Thus it would appear that neither from this in particular, nor from any other expression contained in this passage, we are warranted to conclude, that the members at large, in common with the Rulers, are entitled to govern the Church of Christ.”*

* Mr. Brown's Seventh Letter.

From the view we have taken of the arguments which are advanced for these three different, and even opposite, systems, a few remarks seem to present themselves to our mind. First—It is very desirable that every man should have his judgment satisfied with respect to the doctrine of Scripture on this, as well as on any other subject; and that can only be expected by a patient and candid examination of the evidence, in all its points, and in all its different bearings, and by weighing the different arguments against each other.

Secondly—Though it is very necessary that men of learning and penetration should make themselves well acquainted with what has been written by the principal advocates, for each of the three forms of Ecclesiastical Government, yet it is sufficient for men of common education, whose knowledge must be extremely limited, having acquired just as much information as is requisite to put them in possession of the great points on which the systems differ, without embarrassing themselves with arguments, many of which they are not likely to understand, and entangling themselves in thickets and mazes in which they may be perplexed and lost, to search the New Testament for themselves, carefully marking that form to which it seems to point. If they study the arguments employed by the advocates of any one form, impartiality requires that they give equal attention to those of the other two, and it is very improbable that they will bring minds equal to the decision. Perplexity and doubt will more likely be the result, than rational satisfaction. The special pleader, instead of throwing light upon questions that are difficult, generally scatters darkness on those which, without his comments, would admit of an easy solution. Men of

weak understanding, and who can form few accurate ideas on any subject, will employ their time to much better advantage, by studying the great truths of Christianity, which make even *babes* wise to salvation, and leaving such controversies to those who have an arm that can wield, and an eye that can direct their weapons. But alas! it is seldom indeed that a weak man knows his own character, and every fool will be meddling. In all parties those who are the least qualified, are generally the most ready to decide.

Thirdly—When we reflect that among those who have embraced, and who have defended the three opposite systems, are to be found many writers, eminent for their abilities and for their piety, who had laboriously examined the claims of all; and who with respect to the vital doctrines of Christianity were in perfect harmony; whose light adorned the Gospel, and reflected the beauties of its holiness; we may perhaps wonder, that professing to take their information from the same infallible oracles, they should have arrived at conclusions so directly opposite, and yet each so apparently confident that he had embraced the right, and those who differed from him, the wrong form. This circumstance ought surely to impose something more of modesty and self-diffidence upon every one; and though he be fixed in his judgment to one system, it should make him more moderate to the rest.

Fourthly—As there is much reason to fear, that, in all the three parties, there are many whose whole religion consists in their attachment to the peculiarities of their party, and the whole of whose zeal is expended in contention for these distinctions, it would be well if the Ministers of the different parties would seek rather to give

their zeal a new direction, than to inflame it in its present course. How many have deceived themselves by supposing the effervescence of their passions on such subjects to be the overflow of their love to religion, when they were utter strangers to the love of God and of man !

The advocates of Episcopacy have, very many of them, been no less celebrated for their piety than for their erudition, and for their profound and unwearied investigations on this subject. Nor can there be any reason to suspect in such men as Usher, Leighton, Jewel, Beveridge, Hall, Beddel, Hooker, &c. &c. &c. that ambition tinctured their sentiments on this subject. The same thing may be charitably affirmed of many of the firmest friends of Episcopacy, such as Gisborne, Faber, &c. &c. in our own times.

The claims of the Presbyterians have been enforced by men of piety no less ardent, and of distinguished talents ; and whose researches have been patient and laborious. Besides writers on the Continent, such as Beza, Martyr, Zanchius, Blondel, Salmasius, &c. &c. &c. this island has produced many, Calderwood, Rutherford, Henry, Baxter, Witherspoon, Anderson, and in our times, Hill, Brown, Dick, &c. It is proper to observe that the general body of those who in England are called Presbyterians, have been unjustly called so, as they adopt no part of that system ; and as the form of their government is independent. They indeed differ from the general sentiments of the Independents, in rejecting (many of them at least) the doctrines of Evangelical religion, and in adopting Arianism.

The cause of Independency has been defended by men of the most exalted piety, and of the most respectable abilities, and who formed their judgment on this subject,

not upon a superficial view, but upon a persevering investigation of the three forms of government. To prove this, it is sufficient to mention the names of Owen, Watts, Doddridge, Cotton, and Bradbury. The late Dr. Campbell, though a Minister of the Church of Scotland, threw the weight of his labours into the same scale, and Mr. Ewing, and Mr. Carson have supported the cause with considerable address and eloquence. In England the Independents are a highly respectable body of Protestant Dissenters.

The discordancy which appears in the sentiments of those great and good men, though it ought not to abate the eagerness of our researches for truth, ought surely to impress our minds with candour to such as differ from us, and to impose modesty and caution, when we review the steps by which we proceeded in our investigation of these subjects. When names of the first respectability stand opposed to us, arrogance in asserting our own opinions, acrimony, virulence, and invective against others, are highly indecorous. The most excellent persons, who adopted opposite systems, have lived in unity of affection, and in the cordiality of Christian friendship, mutually confessing when their sentiments differed, that they saw but in part, and that difficulties were to be encountered in every stage of the controversy. Thus several of the most exalted characters of the Episcopal Divines of the Church of England, loved and respected Calvin, and were in their turn loved and respected by him. Thus Usher, Leighton, and many other venerable men, made great concessions to conciliate the Presbyterians, and to form an union with them. Thus Baxter, Henry, and other Presbyterians of the same sentiments, showed a disposition to coalesce with the Church of England, by

every sacrifice which they thought they could make, consistently with their duty. Thus Rutherford, though a Presbyterian, admitted to his pulpit Archbishop Usher; and thus too, Dr. Owen, when Chancellor of the University of Oxford, gave most of the livings he had at his disposal to Presbyterians, and declared that he could readily join with the Presbyterian Church of Scotland; though he himself had adopted the doctrines of the Independents. Thus Bishop Secker, and Bishop Gibson, cultivated the friendship of Dr. Watts, and well knew how to appreciate the excellent talents and dispositions of that eminent divine. And thus, even Warburton, as well as the two dignitaries just mentioned, paid the willing tribute of respect to the piety and virtues of Dr. Doddridge.



ON THE UNITED CHURCHES OF ENGLAND AND IRELAND.

By whom, or at what time, Christianity was first planted in Britain, is a point far from being settled by the investigations of those, who, with the greatest learning and labour have endeavoured to explore the truth of history. The only certain lights by which we can be conducted in tracing the progress of the Gospel, in its first dissemination, are indeed those with which the inspired writers supply us. When these leave us, we enter the regions of uncertainty and conjecture, and as on the present questions they cannot be brought to bear, we must despair of obtaining satisfactory information. Our Savi-

our prophesied that the triumphs of his religion should spread with the effulgence and rapidity of lightning ; and the Apostle Paul recording his own exertions, and those of his fellow labourers, tells us, that "their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world." Whether this Apostle was the first preacher of Christianity in this Island, as Bishops Jewel and Stillingfleet contend ; or whether Simon Zelotes and Joseph of Arimathea, according to the opinion of Baronius, were the first heralds of salvation to the inhabitants of Britain ; or whether the blessings of true religion were first received, in this country, at a period posterior to the lives of those venerable men, are questions which do not admit of an easy, or even of a certain solution. The accounts of King Lucius, who is said to have reigned in Britain, about the middle of the second century, and to have been the first Christian monarch in Europe, have been gathered from the apocryphal writings of some of the Fathers, and have derived their principal authority from their being adopted by the respectable names of Bede and Usher.

If Christianity was introduced into this Island, at an earlier period of its history, than nearly the end of the sixth century, its success must have been either extremely limited, or of very short duration. When Augustine, who was sent by the Roman Pontiff, Gregory the Great, to convert the British Saxons, arrived in Kent in 597, he found Ethelbert and his subjects Pagans, though Bertha, that Prince's Queen, who had been educated in the principles of the Gospel, resolutely adhered to that holy doctrine.* The labours of Augustine, which were

* Bede, Lib. 1, Cap. 25.

animated by fervent zeal, were attended with great success, and he was consecrated the first Archbishop of Canterbury, and invested by Gregory with authority over all the British churches. The establishment of Christianity in England having taken place in an age, in which the power and splendor of the Church were growing with a rapidity, equal to her retrograde motion from the purity and simplicity of better times, it was necessarily contaminated with much folly and superstition. The decline of pure religion was attended with an equal decline of literature, and within a century or two, an universal torpor seems to have seized the minds of men. Even in the dismal gloom of that night which, for a thousand years, sat deep over the nations of Europe, some gleams of true piety and science darted through the thick shades, to relume the British horizon. Alfred the Great, not only cultivated religion and learning himself, but was their generous patron, and by the influence of his example and encouragement, who shone in a dark age as a star of the first magnitude, their empire was considerably extended.

Wickliff was the next in our Island who burst those fetters, which ignorance had thrown round the minds of men, and which superstition had rivetted. He roused considerable numbers from the sleep which had so powerfully seized, and so long chained the active powers of the human mind. He first awakened them to think, and then that they might think justly, he let in upon their astonished eyes the light of Revelation, by translating the Scriptures into the English language. Though all the terrors of persecution were called in to repress the inroads of truth, the Popish clergy were only able to retard, not to stop her progress. Wickliff died in peace,

at Lutterworth, in 1384; but the doctrines he taught outlived him, and though their current was forcibly opposed, they found a secret vent; and were, by a silent course, watering and fertilizing the channel which received them. From this time to the Reformation, they may be said rather to have found a covered passage than to have become stagnant, and when the external impediments were removed, they rose with healing virtue into open day. After the translation of the Scriptures, the darkness of our midnight was past, and though the difficulty of obtaining, and the danger of being known to consult the sacred oracles, by confining, impaired their light, the former darkness, as well as the truths of Christianity, was now become visible to the eyes of men.

When the heaven-taught eye of Luther had penetrated the mystery of iniquity which had so long bewildered Europe, and when the beams of truth had dissipated the illusion from his own mind, he set the trumpet to his mouth to proclaim the spiritual jubilee to the nations. At its sound, the doctrines taught by Wickliff, re-echoed in [murmurs distinct and loud, and shook to its centre, the empire of superstition in Britain. Among the first that ran to prop her tottering throne, was Henry the Eighth. This prince, whose character affords a striking proof of the little value that crowns and sceptres, riches and honours, bear in the sight of God, though not destitute either of natural or of acquired abilities, was a compound of pride, sensuality, jealousy, bigotry, caprice, and cruelty, of rapacity and profusion, of tyranny and sullenness, of the most violent resentments, and of the blackest ingratitude, and, in short, of almost every vice that is found to debase and brutalize the human heart. In the confidence of juvenile ardor, he wrote a book

against Luther, in defence of the seven sacraments. This production was received by the Pontiff with the highest expressions of respect, and Henry received as an ample reward, the title of "Defender of the Faith;" a title which, whether we consider the character of the giver or of the receiver, or the service by which it was earned, it is strange, should still be worn by our monarchs. This doughty champion was soon confuted by Luther, with irresistible force of argument. Luther has been severely censured for the acrimony of spirit and style, with which he treated Henry; and perhaps his conduct is, in some degree indefensible; but it should be remembered, that the delicacy with which controversy, either political or religious, is now managed, was, at that time unknown; and consequently Luther's asperity has a claim to be considered as the fault, rather of the age than of the man. Besides, Henry by entering the lists with Luther, and attacking that Reformer, had put himself upon a level with his antagonist, and when Henry had forgotten that he was a monarch, is it strange that Luther should have forgotten it likewise?

But Henry had much more formidable weapons in reserve, to oppose to the doctrines of the Reformation, than syllogisms brought from the stores of Thomas Aquinas; and by their terrors he endeavoured to suppress the Protestant religion. The violence of his own passions, however, by diverting his attention to another object, obstructed, for some time, his intolerance, and at last occasioned a total and final breach with the see of Rome. Henry, (a dispensation from Pope Julius having been previously obtained,) had married Catharine of Arragon, the widow of his brother Arthur, with whom he had long cohabited, and who had born him several children. While his Queen

retained the charms of youth and beauty, no scruples of conscience had disturbed the peace of his own mind, but when the infirmities of declining years, as there was some disparity in their ages, had cooled the ardour, and long possession had sated the keenness of his passion for his wife, he began to suffer some qualms with respect to the legality of his marriage. These, it would appear, had derived no inconsiderable degree of force, from the beauty and attractions of Ann, maid of honour to the Queen. Having applied to Clement, the reigning Pope, for a divorce, and at the end of six years, finding his suit in endless mazes lost, he had his marriage examined in the court of Cranmer, who had been created Archbishop of Canterbury. By the sentence of that prelate, the King's marriage with Catharine was annulled, as unlawful and invalid. This contempt of the Pope was soon followed by the sentence of excommunication, which was fulminated against Henry. That prince was too high-spirited to submit tamely to such an indignity, and he threw off all subjection to the see of Rome; renounced the papal supremacy, and was, by his parliament, declared the Supreme Head of the Church of England. His quarrel with the Pope did not lessen his attachment to the principal doctrines of the Church of Rome, and the doctrine of transubstantiation, in particular, was one of his favourite tenets. The worship of images he indeed prohibited, and the translation of the Scriptures into the English language, and their general circulation, he allowed. By his order, and that of the clergy, the prayers for processions, and the litanies were made into English, and used in public worship. The King's Primer was published in 1545, which contained among other things, the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, the Ten Commandments, Venite, Te Deum, and

other hymns and collects, in English ; and several of them in the same version now used in the litany.* The monasteries were plundered by the King, and their spoils afforded him a rich supply to his wants. With respect to some subjects in dispute between the Church of Rome and the Protestants, his opinions were wavering and unsettled ; and the winds of heaven were not more uncertain than the winds of doctrine by which he ordered the faith of his subjects to be regulated. What was published as the standard of Orthodoxy at one time, and enforced by the threat of death, was soon after condemned, and the opposite doctrine enforced by the same penalty. With indiscriminate vengeance, those who believed in the Pope's Supremacy, and those who denied the doctrine of the Real Presence in the sacrament, Papists and Protestants, fell the victims of his infuriate bigotry. During the remainder of Henry's life, the principles of genuine Christianity, though openly resisted with all the violence of power, were gradually diffusing themselves through the mass of society, till, like the little leaven hid in the three measures of meal, the whole lump was leavened.

The reign of his son, Edward VI, was, in England, the auspicious era of the Reformation. The doctrines of the Protestant faith were not only rescued from persecution, but obtained all the sanction that human laws could give them. Images were removed from all the Churches. The communion was ordered to be administered to the laity, in both kinds ; private masses were abolished, and many superstitious practices were ordered to be discontinued. Forty-two articles of religion were

* Whentley's Illustration of the Book of Common Prayer, p. p. 24, 25.

drawn up by Archbishop Cranmer and Bishop Ridley, and being approved by the Convocation, were published in Latin and in English. A new liturgy was composed, all the offices of which were to be performed in the vulgar tongue, and from it all prayers to saints were carefully excluded. The celibacy of the Clergy, though recommended, was to be no longer enforced. In short, the most obnoxious doctrines of popery, by which men had been retained in ignorance of the great truths of Christianity, and in the practice of superstitious and idolatrous rites, and in the shackles of spiritual tyranny, were renounced. To one of the most unjust, unrelenting, and disgraceful principles and practices of the Church of Rome, the leaders of the Church of England, in common with all other Protestants, continued rigidly to adhere. The liberty which they so justly claimed, to choose for themselves the tenets of their faith, they obstinately refused to give to others, and the fires from which they had so lately and so narrowly escaped, they readily lighted to destroy those whose claims stood upon the same footing with their own. That spirit of intolerance which was the bane and the disgrace of the Reformation, and which made Christians mutually unjust, as well as cruel to each other, continued for a long period afterwards to disgrace religion, and to poison in the source, the streams of human comfort. It tortures every principle of our sensibility, to behold the venerable, the pious, the generous, the mild, and the gentle Cranmer, persuading Edward to commit to the flames, Joan of Kent, a poor deluded enthusiast, or perhaps rather a maniac, for whom compassion would have prescribed solitary confinement and a physician. To the honour of that most amiable Prince it is recorded, that when he could no longer re-

sist the importunity of the Primate, he burst into tears, and told him that if any wrong was done, the guilt should be entirely on *his* head. Several Baptists, and one Arian, were condemned, and, with the same cruelty and injustice, burnt alive. Had Cranmer, and those excellent men, who, not from malignity of disposition, but from an error they brought with them from the Church of Rome, acted a principal part in these tragedies, only remembered the great rule of Christian morality, to do to others as they wished to be done by, they would have revered the prerogative of Heaven, and left even the worst of heretics to His judgment, to whom alone vengeance belongs. When laws so tyrannical were executed with a severity so unrelenting, it was no wonder that the Princess Mary could, with the greatest difficulty, procure a connivance from the Council, at her private use of the mass. The persecution she suffered from the Protestants had, probably, considerable influence in disposing her to inflict severities afterwards upon them, and would also probably be considered as a sufficient apology for their infliction.

By the death of Edward, who expired in the sixteenth year of his age, and in the seventh of his reign, the Church and Nation of England suffered a loss which it was not easy to repair. The opening germ of his talents, both natural and acquired, his native virtues, the fervor of his devotion, the gentleness and flexibility of his manners, his vigorous application to both study and business, his high sense of justice and equity, which far exceeded what could be expected at his years, the tender sympathies of his nature, which melted at every scene of distress, had raised to the highest pitch the expectations of his subjects; and the blossoms of the spring had induced

them to hope for a noble harvest, when all these excellent qualities of their Sovereign should be ripened and mellowed. But all these accomplishments, of so great promise, were to be matured in a soil and climate more congenial to their nature, and where there is no more curse; and therefore they were translated from earth to Heaven, to ripen before the throne of God and the Lamb.

Soon after the accession of Mary, the whole fabric which, in her brother's reign, had been raised with so careful and so pious a hand, was demolished, and all its beauties laid in the dust. Popery, with all its absurd and impious doctrines, its cumbersome rites, its extravagant pretensions, and its idolatrous worship, reared its polluted dome, on the former site of the temple of truth; and, that the consecration might be worthy of the pile, it was sprinkled with the blood of hundreds of human sacrifices. The fires were every where lighted, and victims carefully selected to be sacrificed around the altars of superstition. No station was so elevated, as to afford protection from the tyranny and cruelty,—no condition so humble, as to escape the vigilance of the Ecclesiastical despotism and rage, over which this female fury presided. Like another Tisiphone, let out from Stygian darkness, upon this upper world, she brandished her flaming torch, and called for fresh victims to feed the flames she had kindled. With a gloomy delight, this priestess of Moloch, saw her altars fattened with human gore. In mercy to mankind, it pleased Heaven to call her from this scene of blood and slaughter, before her appetite was gorged with the torments of human nature, to give an account of the havock she had made, and the blood she had spilt. Archbishop Grindal reckons

the number of those who were burnt in her reign, to have been eight hundred; but Bishop Burnet, in his history of the Reformation, makes them two hundred and eighty-four.

When death had disburdened our island of this fiend, and Elizabeth had succeeded to the throne, justice and mercy returned to their former habitation, and true religion rose out of her grave, to smile upon, and to bless the children of men. The temple of the living God was rebuilt, and while Truth sprang from the earth, Righteousness looked down from Heaven. The Protestant religion was restored to the establishment it obtained in Edward's reign. The Supremacy was, by an act of Parliament, annexed to the Crown, and the Queen was denominated, Governess of the Church. By this act the Crown was invested with power, without the concurrence either of the Parliament, or of the Convocation, to repress all heresies, and might establish or repeal any canons; might alter every point of discipline, and might ordain or abolish any religious rite and ceremony. In determining what was heresy, the sovereign was only limited to such doctrines as had been adjudged heresy, by the authority of the Scriptures; by the first four general councils; or by any general council which followed the Scripture as their rule; or to such other doctrine as should hereafter be denominated heresy, by the Parliament and Convocation.

The character of Elizabeth has justly obtained a distinguished place among those of the great Sovereigns who, by their wisdom, their penetration, their learning, their love of their country, and their highly cultivated talents, have conferred more honour upon thrones and sceptres, than they derived from them. She was, however, a Prin-

cess of high spirit, and impatient of every restraint that opposed boundaries to her absolute power; and, as the love of liberty has generally been found to be associated with the doctrines of the Reformation, and despotic government to be in unison with the tenets of Popery, she seems to have been inclined to a nearer approach to the spirit and superstition of Popery, than the principles of the Establishment would admit. To one of her divines, who had preached a sermon in defence of the Real Presence, she gave thanks for his pains and piety.* When Nowel, one of her Chaplains, had, in a sermon, spoken of the sign of the cross with less reverence than she approved, she commanded him to leave that ungodly digression, and return to his text. It was the interposition of Cecil alone, that prevented her from forbidding the clergy to marry. So little zeal had she for sermons, that she thought two or three preachers a sufficient number for a whole county: a sentiment which sufficiently discriminates between a predilection for Popery, and an attachment to the Reformation: the spirit of the latter requiring a reasonable service for its devotions; that of the former, nothing more than implicit faith. In the choice she made between the two religions, it would appear that policy and external circumstances, more than religious principles of any kind, had determined her decision. Her mother had embraced the Protestant faith, and warmly exerted herself in its defence. The Pope, by his bull, had declared the nullity of her mother's marriage, and her own illegitimacy; and, by consequence, she was considered by the Catholics as an usurper.

* Heylin, p. 124.

Those, who in the most perilous times had been her friends, were all attached to the Reformation, and those who had been her enemies, were of the Catholic party. She therefore naturally embraced that party, to which she was invited by every consideration of interest and convenience. But the highest designation to which she seems to have been entitled, is, that of a Protestant with Popish principles. Whether her protestantism was the consequence of conviction, or of reasons of state, placed at the head of the Protestant interest, she performed many substantial services to the Protestants abroad, and was justly considered by them, as well as by their enemies, their protectress. To her memory the English Church and nation owe the tribute of gratitude.

It was, during her reign, that those men arose in England who were called by the name of Puritans, because they contended for a mode of worship more purified, from what they considered as the ceremonies of Popery, than that of the Established Church; and for a course of life more pure and strict, than was thought necessary by the greater part of those who were members of the Church of England. With respect to the doctrinal articles of the Church, there was, during Elizabeth's reign, no dispute. Nor does it appear that even Episcopacy was the object of their general aversion, for several Prelates were attached to the tenets of the Puritans, and suffered in their cause. The unjust and imprudent severities inflicted on the Puritans, to the infliction of which, many of the Bishops were accessory, contributed, in the two following reigns, to spread among the people a general aversion to that mode of Church Government. The principal subjects of the complaints, made by the Puritans against the national worship were, kneeling at the Com-

munien, the sign of the cross in baptism, the surplice, and the other peculiar vestments of the clergy. These objections are said to have been principally formed and disseminated through the nation, by those Protestants who, in the reign of Mary, had fled for an asylum into Foreign Countries, where the simple and less splendid worship of Geneva, and other Churches modelled on the same principles, presented to many of them, what they reckoned, a more perfect form. Returning to their own country after the storm of persecution had ceased to rage, they laboured with vehemence to retrench the ceremonies of the Church of England. To repress these attempts, Elizabeth appointed a Court of Ecclesiastical Commission, which she invested with all the powers of a Spanish Inquisition. "They (the Commissioners) were empowered to visit and reform all errors, heresies, schisms; in a word, to regulate all opinions, as well as to punish all breach of uniformity in the exercise of public worship. They were directed to make inquiry, not only by the legal methods of juries and witnesses, but by all other means and ways, which they could devise; that is, by the rack, by torture, by inquisition, by imprisonment. Where they thought proper to suspect any person, they might administer to him an oath, called *ex-officio*, by which he was bound to answer all questions, and might thereby be obliged to accuse himself or his most intimate friend. The fines which they levied were merely discretionary, and often occasioned the total ruin of the offender, contrary to the established laws of the kingdom. The imprisonment, to which they condemned any delinquent, was limited by no rule but their own pleasure."*

* Hume's History of England, Vol. 5, p. 213.

The oppressive and cruel sentences of this iniquitous Court, together with those of the Star-Chamber, another tribunal utterly irreconcilable with the principles of a free Constitution, in the reign of Charles I, were the means by which an universal odium was excited against the Government, and the spirit of the people at last roused to resistance.

In Elizabeth's reign the Articles of the Church were reduced from forty-two to thirty-nine ; and since that time they have suffered no change. They were published with this title, "Articles whereupon it was agreed by the Archbishops and Bishops of both provinces, and the whole Clergy, in the convocation holden at London, in the year of our Lord God, 1562, according to the computation of the Church of England, for the avoiding of the diversities of opinions, and for the stablishing of consent touching true religion. Put forth by the Queen's authority."—They were first published in Latin only, but in 1571, they were published by public authority in both the Latin and English languages.

The succession of James to the Crown of England had flattered the hopes of the Puritans, with the prospect of a milder and more auspicious reign. They expected that a Prince who had been educated in the same school of theology with themselves, and who seemed to have so deeply imbibed its spirit and discipline, as to pronounce the Kirk of Scotland the purest under the sun, would relax, if he did not sever, the chains in which they had been so long held by the government of Elizabeth. But they soon found that his power was employed, not only to rivet them, but to give them additional weight. At first, indeed, he pretended to moderate the passions, and to soften the prejudices of both Churchmen and Puritans,

and thus by compromising the pretensions of both parties, to reduce them to harmony. Under the pretence of mediating, as an impartial umpire, he appointed a conference of the Bishops and dignified Clergymen of the Church, on the one hand, and of the leaders of the Puritans, on the other, to be held at Hampton Court. On this occasion the King and his ministers were present. But the King did not long support the character of a mediator which he had assumed. He soon declared himself hostile to the Puritans, and entered the lists as champion for the discipline and ceremonies of the Church. He insisted particularly on the alliance between Monarchy and Episcopacy, which he considered as so intimate that they must stand or fall together. His maxim was, No Bishop, no King. The Prelates, in their turn, offered incense liberally to the talents of the royal disputant, whom they considered as the oracle of Heaven. Whitgift, the primate, is said to have exclaimed with rapture, that undoubtedly his Majesty spoke by the special assistance of God's Spirit. With such high-seasoned panegyrics was he fed by his courtly Prelates. They admired his eloquence, his masterly skill in theological controversy, and his talents for debate. He was too partial to himself to question the accuracy of their judgment. The Puritans, who never knew how to combine flexibility of manners with steadiness of principle, and who were generally roughly obstinate, and repulsive in their habits, were ill qualified to gain upon the affections of such a monarch as James. Stiff and pedantic in his manners; pusillanimous, yet rash in his temper; ostentatious of his learning, yet extremely defective in his judgment of propriety; and though no stranger to dissimulation, which he considered as king-craft, he could neither assume that softness of behaviour

which is necessary to win men's hearts; nor support that dignity and consistency of character, which procure veneration for the persons of princes. Thinking himself qualified to dictate the doctrines and discipline of religion to all his subjects, to call his decisions in question appeared to him a high degree of arrogance, approaching to rebellion. His sovereignty he regarded, not as a trust derived from the people, and held by him for their good, but as a power communicated immediately by God, and for the exercise of which he was accountable only to the donor. Unhappily, many of the Bishops and dignified Clergy supported these extravagant pretensions, and supported them too, in that place, the pulpit, which is the most improper that can be imagined, for agitating and deciding on theories of government. To set bounds to kingly power, was represented as one of the most atrocious crimes, and a presumptuous invasion of that divine right, by which monarchs were constituted the absolute vicegerents of Heaven. Passive obedience to princes was represented as the only sure way by which subjects could hope for eternal glory, and non-resistance the only mark of submission to the will of God. The many were supposed to be made for one, and this "enormous faith," as the Poet justly calls it, was delivered as the dictate equally of the law and of the Gospel. Thus human nature was degraded, that one man might spurn the rest of his species; and, wrapped up in the conceit of his imaginary greatness, might look down equally upon their joys and their sorrows, as those of another race of beings, with whom they possessed nothing in common.

This strange association of absurd politics with religion, was, however, incidental; not the necessary consequence of the religious system adopted by the Church, but the

result of combined rash speculations on political philosophy, a subject which at that time very few of the Clergy had deliberately examined, and which still fewer of them understood. The Church of England, like every other Church, the great doctrines of which are formed upon the maxims of Scripture, is decidedly hostile to faction, and to rebellion against a lawful Government, but she highly appreciates the blessings of a free constitution, and treats with sacred reverence, the rights and privileges of the people. The bench of Bishops have, in various instances, since the Revolution, and particularly in the latter part of Queen Ann's reign, stood forth the firm assertors of the liberties of Englishmen, when they were attacked by their own Representatives. To that order, as such, therefore, no blame can attach from the errors of their predecessors. Presbyterian and Independent Clergymen have, upon various occasions, shown themselves sufficiently disposed to support absolute power, when that power was exerted in their own favour. A man's being a Bishop does not necessarily make him either proud or fawning; and equality of ecclesiastical power, is perfectly consistent with arrogance and ambition.

In the system embraced by the Puritans, the principles of civil liberty, and the desire of further reformation in the services of religion, were combined. *They* were the first who planted in this country the tree of liberty, and who watered its roots with sedulous care. While James and his Bishops were eagerly employed in lopping its branches, and shedding its honours, they watched its growth with a wakeful eye, dug around and manured it, till it struck its fibres deep into the earth, and reared its head majestic towards Heaven. Even the excision of some of its most luxuriant and topmost branches, gave it

a stronger girth, and a greater degree of health and vigor. Happy, had it never been suffered to shoot into wanton boughs, or to assume fantastic and unnatural forms! It was under the shade of this tree that the religious tenets of the Puritans were sheltered, and by entwining themselves round its trunk, they spread their leaves through an ampler space, and acquired a firmness which they could not have attained, had they not been thus protected and supported.

The association of civil tyranny with the forms and discipline of the Church would, at any time, and in any state, in which the spirit of liberty was awake, be likely to prove extremely inimical to her best interests. In the former reign, the principles of a free constitution had been formed into a system, by men of sagacious and penetrating minds, who knew how to appreciate these blessings themselves, and to rouse the sentiments and feelings of others to form a proper estimate of their value. Though the vigorous and watchful government of Elizabeth had carefully repressed, and nipped the first blossoms of rising liberty, its root had taken a firm hold of the soil, and in James's reign, it again sprouted, and rose with increased strength. The leaders of the House of Commons, having caught the flame of freedom, dispersed, and blew up its sparks in the bosoms of the people. Few hearts were so cold as not to feel its heat, and cherish its influence. To extinguish these glowing embers, which threatened, by one general conflagration, to destroy the pillars of absolute government, every exertion of prerogative, and every grasp of power was employed. The calling in of religion to the aid of arbitrary sway, and the employing of her eternal sanctions, to wrest from the hands and hearts of men the most valuable of their tem-

poral rights, was surely not the way to render the worship of the Church either interesting or venerable, to those who were opposing restraints to unlimited prerogative. There is little reason to suppose that the object of the patriots was, at this time, extended beyond the moderate limits of a monarchy, circumscribed by law. A government such as that under which we have the happiness to live, and which gives to the Monarch every power consistent with the happiness of his subjects, and with his own safety and honour, seems to have been the utmost wish of those who struggled, with the most persevering exertions, for the rights of the people. In the irritations which arose from the increased violence of tyranny, to preserve, and even to extend her conquests, it is easy to account for the jealousies and fears which afterwards hurried the eager, but incautious minds of the following race of patriots, into measures equally destructive to monarchy and to liberty. While History records, with impartiality, the errors of both parties, her aim is not to swell the triumph either of the one or of the other; but to teach the present and the future generations of men, wisdom, from the follies of the past. These are the only legitimate spoils which History teaches men to gather from the records of those, who have acted their part on the stage of human life; and who have given place to new actors, whose privilege it is to profit by the mistakes of those who have gone before them.

Though the awful sanctions of religion are, by Christianity, interposed in behalf of civil government in general, and in such a government as we have enjoyed since the Revolution, they are in no danger of being misapplied; the controversy between the Prince who contends for the right of despotic rule, and the people who are struggling

to limit the sceptre of their Monarch by the rules of legal authority, is one on which the precepts of the Gospel cannot be brought to bear, as it records no such opposition of claims. As Christianity has given no directions for the adjusting of such interfering interests, it would be absurd to suppose that the Saviour of the world has cancelled those rights, with which, as the Creator of it, he has invested men. The unnatural conjunction of religion with oppression, by which the former was called in, not to heal, but to inflame the wounds inflicted by the latter, was attended with fatal consequences to the Church; which, taking part with the Sovereign against the natural liberties of mankind, soon began to experience the enmity of the people, who supposed they would find their interest in her destruction. The tenets of the Puritans, being found in unison with civil liberty, were supposed by those in whose breasts the love of freedom strongly glowed, to have a more noble origin, and to conduct to higher and more sacred ends. Liberty has charms that melt the most unfeeling, that fix the most wavering, and that warm the coldest hearts, and the passion which it inspires is generally found to operate with the greatest force, in the noblest minds. In the struggle between its claims and those of prerogative, that form of religion which looked on the rights of mankind with the most friendly eye, was almost sure to obtain the preference, and to rise superior to a rival, which had no other lesson to teach than passive obedience. Even those who were indifferent to the opposite claims of the Church and Puritanism, were soon determined in their choice, by the political interests to which they were attached. The necessity of co-operation with their respective parties, in the attack, or in the defence of absolute

power, made them soon merge all other points of difference in the great lines of distinction. Thus many who, in other circumstances, would have given a decided preference to the religious system of the Church, were, from political motives, ranged on the side of its enemies. Many, even of those who considered the religious opinions of the Puritans as frivolous and absurd; and who, had they not been involved in the vortex of politics, would have rejected them with disdain, were induced to combat by their side for the principles of a free constitution. Even the friends of infidelity, who were equally hostile to the religious sentiments of both, were, many of them, found enlisted on that side to which they were naturally conducted, by their passion for liberty.

The spirit of intolerance and persecution, which the Church at that time possessed, in common with the Puritans, and indeed with all other religious parties, was one of the causes which contributed, in the issue, to the triumph of the latter party, and to her more speedy subversion. Of all the rights to which man can advance a claim, those of conscience are the most valuable and sacred. How bitter soever the draught of slavery is to the human taste, the dregs of the cup are soon wrung out, and a few short years will remove it from our lips for ever. True religion being the passport to a happy immortality, he who has found it has found the pearl of inestimable price, and in the possession of it, he has what will compensate for every human loss; whatever threatens to rob him of that, threatens to make him poor indeed. The worship of God in this world, being inseparably connected with the hope of glory in the world to come; whatever tends to disturb him in that worship, attacks him in the very citadel of all his hopes. Other wounds, how deeply so-

ever they may pierce, may be closed and healed, but those which the shafts of persecution leave, fester in the mind, and the world has no oil nor wine, which it can pour in to alleviate their smart. These considerations sufficiently account for the inveterate resentments, that have so powerfully operated on the minds of the persecuted, against their oppressors. The Puritans had, in the former reign, made some attempts to possess themselves of the liberty to associate in separate congregations from the Church, for the celebration of divine worship. But these had been carefully repressed by the jealous government of Elizabeth. The only expedient that remained, was to assemble in private houses, with all the secrecy of which such meetings were susceptible. Though this practice seems at first to have had the connivance, it soon after roused all the energies of government, to put a stop to it. Fines, imprisonment, and a variety of other punishments, still more severe, were employed to enforce uniformity, and compliance with the established worship. These compulsory measures, so repugnant to the feelings and sentiments of the human mind, which is apt to grow weary even of the objects of its own predilection, when they are no longer free, spread a general spirit of discontent and opposition through the country. The tide running strong in favour of popular government, and against the restraints imposed upon religious worship, so fierce was its current, that, in the next reign, it overpowered all the obstacles which had been opposed to its force, and swept them away with its overflowing flood.

The suspensions and deprivations of the clergy for non-conformity, though perfectly compatible with religious liberty, had very considerable influence in inflaming the animosities, which so many other causes had contributed

to disseminate. Men who accepted benefices, and yet refused obedience to the law enjoining uniformity, could certainly have no reason to complain of persecution. The sufferers, however, were considered as confessors who had fallen the victims of their piety and virtue, and the hand of vengeance was pointed against the inflictors of such punishments, as oppressors and persecutors.—The violence of James in tearing the Protestation from the Journals of the House of Commons, rekindled those embers which, though covered by the appearance of respect to kingly government, the agitation of political debate had never suffered to become cold. His conduct too, which seems to have been little formed on the spirit of devotion, was ill fitted to inspire reverence for those religious tenets, for the support of which his power was engaged. His boisterous passions, which he was far from careful either to curb or to conceal; and his addiction to wine and merriment, were little suited to conciliate veneration for the Monarch, or respect for monarchy. The pleasure he took in hearing and in rehearsing the tales of licentiousness, was calculated to stamp currency on immorality, and to smooth the way to dissoluteness of manners. His disposition to relax the reins of government, by softening its rigours to the Roman Catholics, while he drew them with increased vigour to restrain or to punish the Puritans; his eagerness to match his sons with princesses of the Popish religion, were all extremely hurtful to the interests of the Church of England. His attachment to worthless minions; the mercy he showed to the Earl and Countess of Somerset, though convicted as principals in the blackest and foulest murder, while the instruments of their crimes suffered the full vengeance of the law; his injustice and cruelty to Sir Walter Raleigh, whose fine genius, embellished with all

the learning of ancient and modern times, brightened by manners the most polished and conciliating, seasoned by humanity, and exalted by patriotism, leave an indelible stain on his memory, and contributed to the spread of disaffection to regal government, which had long been growing; and which, in the following reign, burst upon the head of the unhappy Charles.—But of all the acts of James, none gave more offence to men of genuine piety, or was attended with worse consequences to the interests of the Church, than his edict to encourage recreations and sports on the Lord's day. The book, or declaration, which was published on this subject, is said to have been composed by Bishop Morton; and was ordered to be read in all the Churches of the Kingdom. To a reflecting mind, the reading of the Fourth Commandment, as a part of Divine worship; the response of the congregation, "Lord have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this law;" and the proclamation for the breach of the law, by the profanation of the sabbath, must have presented a medley of devotion, impiety, and absurdity, singular in its kind, and calculated to make the offices of religion the sport of infidels.

Charles the First appears to have been a Prince of great sensibility, and to have possessed amiable and excellent dispositions. Had he lived in times more tranquil, or had he presided over a constitution better ascertained and fixed; had the rights of conscience been, in his time, esteemed sacred; and, finally, had he not been seduced from the moderation of his temper, by the pestilential influence of Counsellors, arrogant and passionate, he might have finished a reign of glory to himself, and of happiness to his subjects, with the accumulated honours of a grateful and affectionate people. Many, even of the

harshest and most objectionable measures of his reign, and which cannot be justified, as they were subversive of all the maxims of a limited government, will yet, from the peculiarity of his situation, admit of some excuse, or at least, alleviation. The precedents of former reigns, handed down through a succession of Princes, presented to his eyes traces of power almost despotic, and seldom subject to any control. Popular assemblies had been considered by the Monarchs he succeeded, rather as chambers for registering the edicts of the Sovereign, than as a high Council to direct and limit his operations. Educated by his father in those lofty opinions of prerogative, which he bequeathed to him with his sceptre, taught by his instructions to hope for a throne established upon divine right, Charles was led to consider the limitations the Commons opposed to his power, as an attack upon the inheritance left him by birth-right. The spirit of liberty, which he saw rising every day, and which seemed to acquire a new accession of strength, called, he thought, for more vigorous exertions to repel the hostile aggressions of his subjects. His subjects justly concluded, that the rights of several millions of men, required some better security than the absolute will of their Prince; and were resolved to persevere in the contest, till they wrested them from the grasp of power. In this collision of interests and claims, a breach taking place between Charles and his Parliament, he proceeded to levy by his prerogative, those sums of money from his people, which the consent of their representatives only could legally impose. Arbitrary imprisonment was employed to enforce, what arbitrary power had determined to exact. The Courts of Star-Chamber and High Commission, both of which were arbitrary, and conducted by no other

law than the pleasure of the judges, were employed to overwhelm with their terrors and cruelties, the genius of liberty. The Petition of Right itself, to which the King had given his assent, was wantonly violated, and every measure that could irritate and inflame the minds of men, was tried to render them tame and submissive. Innovations in the Church were added to tyranny in the State, and instances of both were multiplied with such rapidity, that they bade defiance to every consideration of decency and prudence. The impious book of Sunday sports, which had disgraced his father's proclamations, was again restored, and the Ministers of Christianity were enjoined, under the pains of deprivation, to desecrate the worship of God, by reading it. Almost every measure of this unhappy Prince, for some years previous to the calling of the Long Parliament, was either rash and imprudent, or illegal and violent; or such as clashed with every idea of religion and government, that his subjects had learned to form. Despotism in government, and intolerance in religion, oppressed and inflamed the spirits of the people.

It was during his reign, and principally by the influence and power of Archbishop Laud, that the great body of the Clergy revolted from the doctrine of Grace, and sunk into the system of Semi-Pelagianism. The dispute indeed was nominally between the followers of Calvin and those of Arminius; but an essential part of the system of the latter was either excluded, or obtained no distinguished place in the creed of many of those who sheltered their doctrines under his name. The doctrines of Human Depravity, Regeneration by the influence of the Holy Spirit, and Justification by faith in the blood of Christ, all of them holding a distinguished rank among those taught by

Arminius, were either entirely discarded, or not suffered to occupy a prominent place in their discourses. Absolute Predestination and final Perseverance, the two peculiarities of Calvinism, were keenly opposed, but the leading features of vital Christianity, constituent parts both of Arminianism and Calvinism, and of the beautiful Liturgy of the Church of England, ceased, in a great measure, to give animation and effect to the ministry of the clergy. Morality, an essential part, but only a part of religion, was separated from that stock on which alone it could bud and blossom, and fill the world with fruit; and, being thus cut off from its vital sap, it languished and died. A morality without spirit and nerves, was substituted for the Evangelical energies of faith, that works by love to God and to man.—The morals of many who frequented the Court of Charles were, certainly, relaxed; and this was reckoned a sufficient mark of discrimination, by which the Cavaliers were known from those who were in opposition to the Government. The manners of the Puritans, were generally correct, and even austere, and their deportment being stiff and uncourtly, formed a striking contrast with the urbanity and polished manners of their opponents. Though these distinctions of the parties were prevalent, it would be absurd to suppose that they were uniform. Many individuals of piety and virtue, were probably attached to the Court: and many persons of loose principles and habits, concealed under the veil of hypocrisy, were probably connected with the opposite party. The name assumed by the Puritans was that of the Godly, and upon their opponents they imposed that of the Malignants; names which never could be exclusively descriptive of the parties to which they were applied;

and modesty forbade the assumption of the one, and charity the imposition of the other.

This ill-advised Prince, by violating the liberties, and attacking the religious principles of his Scottish subjects, roused them to resistance; and his own army, ill disciplined, and disaffected to his service, having suffered a partial defeat, and being in want of pay, soon became as dangerous to his power, as was that of his formidable opponents: hence the calling of a new Parliament became absolutely necessary. The members of that assembly meeting, while their resentment of former indignities was strong, and while liberty was yet bleeding by her recent wounds, proceeded to disarm the hand that had inflicted her wrongs. In their correction of numberless abuses, introduced by the uncontrollable sway of absolute power, in the establishment of the principles of a free constitution, in chasing from the throne those counselors who had recommended arbitrary measures, and in abolishing for ever the Star-Chamber and High Commission Courts, and other institutions incompatible with a limited monarchy, the merits of that assembly deserve to be recorded with gratitude in the memory of every Englishman. But in the prosecution of their vengeance against Strafford and Laud, their conduct was a complication of injustice, cruelty, and tyranny. Whatever were the demerits of these two ministers, in promoting the maxims of arbitrary government, they had offended against no statute or law of their country, which could expose them to capital punishment; much less were they justly liable to the pains of treason. The constructive treason for which they were put to death was, in itself, a violation of the most obvious principles of liberty, and their violent conduct was the more atrocious, because it was attended

with the most flagrant violation of one of the first maxims of liberty, for which they pretended they were contending. The manner in which the Bill of Attainder against Strafford was carried through the house of Peers, by tumultuary petitions and threats, through the influence of the popular party, was a shameful outrage against the most sacred principles of justice, which supposes every man to be innocent, till he be found guilty. Petitioning to take away the life, even of a condemned criminal, seems to be inhuman. Upon the whole, it may safely be pronounced, that none of the former measures of Charles's reign, of which they so justly complained, was more arbitrary and tyrannical, than their own conduct in the prosecution of Strafford and Laud. Democratical tyranny often presents a front more hardened and unblushing, than that of a single despot. But whether it be the mere will of one, or of the many, that constitutes the law, the true principles of liberty fall equally a sacrifice to arbitrary power. About this time both Houses of Parliament signed a protestation to defend the established religion. It is highly probable that, even in this stage of the contest, the *Leaders* of the Commons at least, had meditated the abolition of of what they had promised to defend. The manner of their attack on the Church, the arts which they employed in its subversion, the violence by which the Commons at last succeeded in their schemes, in opposition to the other two branches of the legislature, were of such a kind that no upright and moderate man, whatever his opinions be of the establishment they overturned, or of that which they substituted in its place, can possibly approve the measures they employed. Religion herself is of a constitution too tender to preserve her health and vigour, unimpaired amidst shocks and convulsions so violent and alarming.

From the clash of conflicting interests and passions, she either retires for shelter to the calm retreat of solitude and peace; or, if she cannot escape from the noisome breath of tumult and war, she shrivels and dies.

In chase of imaginary liberty, the Commons, by over-leaping the proper boundaries which are as necessary to stop the violence of the people as the power of the Sovereign, converted what had formerly been an absolute monarchy, into an absolute democracy. Instead of adjusting the wheels of government in such a manner, that by action and counteraction they might mutually co-operate, and at the same time check the irregular and violent motions of each other, they destroyed every controlling spring that was necessary to direct the political machine, and to keep it from falling to pieces. Not content with abolishing the dangerous prerogatives of the crown, which were incompatible with constitutional freedom and with individual liberty, they robbed it of those gems which were equally necessary to its lustre and to its solidity. The King, seeing it stripped of its jewels, defiled in the dust, and trampled under the feet of the Commons, flew to rescue it from its disgrace, and to restore it to its former splendour and honours. Thus was a civil war, with all its horrors, kindled in the nation, and which, for years, raged with unabating fury, preying upon the vitals of the kingdom. Both parties, it must be confessed, were intemperate in their zeal, and violent in their resentments. The Commons, dreading the return of that absolute power, which had laid the liberties of men prostrate on the ground, proceeded to paralyse the arm of the Monarch, instead of limiting and restraining its operations. They probably did not foresee the consequences of the extremes they pursued; and the fears they entertained for their

personal safety, from the recoiling vengeance of their prince, would probably suggest that as they had drawn their sword against him, prudence required them to throw away the scabbard. The rashness and violence of Charles in the accusation of the five members, which showed that he had laid up deep and fixed resentments of their former measures, unhappily confirmed their fears, and gave an edge to all their proceedings. They soon obtained a triumph over their Monarch; but they found, in the issue, that they themselves had suffered in the conflict, and that the authority of the Sovereign, and the liberty of the subject, had expired together.

In the prosecution of the civil war, Cromwell had gradually risen, by his knowledge of intrigue, and by his talents for that art, from the rank of a subaltern to the first place in the confidence and command of the army; and from being the servant, he soon made himself the master of the Parliament. That Assembly which had overturned the Government, were forced to obey the imperious mandates of their own creature, who employed the power with which they had invested him, for their own destruction. It is thus in almost every democratical government, the balance of power is in a state of perpetual fluctuation, until it settles in a military despotism. In the general ferment of society, those parts which are the most noble, like the gold and silver in a shipwrecked vessel, sink to the bottom of the sea, while every thing that is light and vile, swims on the surface. The History of England in the sixteenth century, and the History of France in the end of the eighteenth, present to the eye of the politician similar scenes: two of the most polished and powerful nations in the world, eagerly grasping the phantoms of visionary rights, and sinking

into all the horrors of military Government. Let the beacons erected by the folly of England and France, teach the present and future generations of men to tremble at the speculative systems of infuriated politicians; and, satisfied with a practicable and tried liberty, to enjoy the blessings of Heaven with thankfulness and moderation. Should any other nation, with such awful monuments before their eyes, adopt systems of government as wild and fantastical, some Cromwell, or some Buonaparte, will rise from the dregs of society, to rule them with whips, and scorpions, and a rod of iron. Cromwell does not indeed appear, like the Corsican, to have wantoned in cruelty. The acts of tyranny which the former perpetrated were, perhaps, politically necessary for the acquisition, or for the support of his absolute power; but it was his own insatiable ambition that impressed the necessity; and for the principle, as well as for the means he employed to gratify it, he was justly responsible to the Supreme Tribunal. To mount the throne of a race of ancient Monarchs, he was resolute to wade through the blood of his murdered Sovereign; and, while he openly professed to hold absolute power in abhorrence, he made every effort to climb to the possession of it. To a religious mind, no feature of his character appears so shocking as his hypocrisy. Religion was the tool by which he rose to usurped authority, and while he talked of seeking the Lord, he sought nothing but the means of power and splendour. By the habits of deep dissimulation, he for a while imposed upon the unsuspecting; but these, like all other hollow pretences, became so well known that they could no longer deceive.

Though the beginning and progress of the civil wars in Charles the First's time, and the History of the Revo-

tion in France, were perfectly coincident in the advancement of the same extravagant claims of factious liberty, in the murder of their Sovereign, in the abolition of Monarchy, in the destruction of nobility, in the fall of the religious establishments, in the perpetual revolutions and changes of ephemeral governments, in the wretchedness and misery of the body of the people, every day adding to the tale of their woes; and in both settling at last in a military government, yet in one point of view they were not only dissimilar, but opposed to each other. In the scenes which led to the civil wars in England, and in all the troubles which followed, religion appears to have taken a powerful hold of the minds of many of the contending parties. In one thing, however, they were equally under the power of prejudice, in rejecting those maxims of toleration which Christianity dictates, and sound policy requires. They struggled not for the divine right of worshipping God according to their consciences, but for the predominance of their own tenets, which aimed at the extinction of those that were opposed to them. One cannot read, in the History of those times, without concern, that in the treaty of Newport, when Charles required the liberty of using a liturgy in his own chapel, his request was positively refused by the Parliament. But when our resentment at this indignity suffers us to reflect, that this very Monarch had refused to hundreds of thousands of his own subjects a similar right, though of worshipping in a different way; a right in which every man has an interest as deep as that of his Prince, our anger at this mutual obstinacy and injustice, is turned into compassion for the folly of both parties. Yet, with this opposition of religious sentiments on some subjects, it deserves to be faithfully recorded, that with the exception of the mar-

der of their Sovereign, of Strafford and of Laud, few instances of deliberate cruelty stain those pages of our history. Even among those who embraced modes of religion that were extravagant, and little under the chastisement of sobriety, as many such there were during Cromwell's Usurpation, we see no traces of that ferocity which steepes itself in blood, and which becomes the more insatiable, in proportion as it becomes gorged with human carnage. Religion, even in her wildest freaks, is mild and relenting, when we compare her with the yells and fiend-like fury of Atheism. The Revolution in France had been prepared and accelerated by infidelity. It opened with scenes from which humanity revolts, and turns away her eyes with horror. Its progress was written in blood, which streamed in every street and lane of the capital, from the human heads carried in triumph, by demons incarnate. It spared neither sex nor age, neither the cries of helpless innocents, nor the feeble limbs of the man who was tottering under the load of years; neither the melting softness of the virgin's tears, nor the silver hairs of the venerable matron, could disarm its rage, or arrest its fury.

In one point of view, it must be confessed, the French Revolution paid an unwilling tribute to the honour of Religion. They made the abolition of Christianity the prologue to these scenes of blood and horror, to which the history of human society has nothing that can be compared. As men who prepare the way for acts of debauchery, begin by putting out the lights, and thus pay a forced compliment to decency, the actors in the deepest tragedies of human massacres, did Christianity the justice and honour to renounce the profession of it, as the best preparation for their enormities. It had been well,

had many fanatical pretenders to religion in Cromwell's time, rather renounced the religion of Jesus, than made it the watch word of faction, and a ladder to political power. The crooked policy of those men, who had religion always in their mouths, but never either in their hearts or lives, who profaned the language of Inspiration, by making it the vehicle of the most trifling ideas, and polluted the awful name of God, by applying it to the ravages of tyranny, or to the acts of deceit, gave a stab to the vitality of religion in this country, from which to this day it has never recovered. Justification by grace through the Redemption of the Gospel, and Sanctification through the influence of the Holy Spirit, though interwoven with the whole frame of the religion of Christ, accurately stated in the Articles and Homilies, and diffused through the whole liturgy of the Church of England, have, ostensibly for no other reason than because they were professed by those men, fallen into general disrepute, and though they never can be confuted, they have been suffered to languish in neglect.

It was with the Presbyterians that the Church had first to struggle for her existence, and the dispute was not about the great doctrines of Christianity, for these were equally embraced by the creeds of both parties; but wholly about Church Government, liturgical or extemporary prayers, rites, and ceremonies. The tribunitian arts by which the Presbyterians succeeded in overturning the national establishment, and procured for their own system the sanctions of law, were not long able to retain the power they had acquired. By superior refinements in policy, the Independents out-schemed them, and wrested from their hands, through their own supineness, the badges of Ecclesiastical power. These again were trepanned by

the superlative dissimulation and finesse of their own servants, and sunk under the same sort of tyranny by which they had a little before triumphed. Thus every new scheme of Civil and Ecclesiastical Government, formed a precedent for a still newer experiment, till Cromwell, with the name of Protector, but with much greater than regal power, settled, at the point of the bayonet, the rights and liberties of the Commonwealth, and the doctrines and discipline of the Church.

When we reflect upon the peremptory refusal, given by the Presbyterian Parliament, to the request of Charles to have the use of a liturgy in his own Chapel, it is easy to imagine into what a state of proscription the religious service of the Church of England had fallen, when, in the plenitude of their power, they had substituted their own discipline and form of worship, in the place of the former religious establishment. The whole Episcopal body suffered persecution; their assemblies for religious worship were interdicted, and the use of the liturgy forbidden. Many of the clergy suffered much oppression and ill-usage, both from the Presbyterians and Independents. Several Bishops, men of great worth and excellence, and particularly Bishop Hall,* Bishop Prideaux, and Bishop Brownrigg, were treated in so outrageous a manner that it is impossible for any man either of piety or of feeling, to read the account without the warmest sentiments of indignation. Those very men who, but a few years before, had groaned under the tyranny of civil and religious oppression, became in their turn, tyrants and oppressors, and without scruple practised upon others what

* See Bishop Hall's "Hard Measure," written by Himself.

they had so severely and so justly condemned, when it was inflicted on themselves.—By an ordinance of the Parliament, in 1645, all who preached or wrote against the Presbyterian Directory for Public Worship, were subjected to a fine not exceeding fifty pounds; and for using the Book of Common Prayer, even in a private family, every person, for the third offence, was liable to imprisonment for a year. In the following year the Presbyterians applied to Parliament for an act to enforce Uniformity in religion, and to extirpate Popery and Heresy, with which they ranked Prelacy and Schism. Though this petition was rejected, the Parliament, in 1648, published an ordinance, denouncing death to all who should deny, First,—The being of a God.—Second,—His attributes of Omniscience, Omnipresence, &c.—Third,—The doctrine of the Trinity.—Fourth,—The two natures of Christ.—Fifth,—The Resurrection, the Atonement, the Scriptures. So utterly ignorant of the first principles of Religious Liberty were those men, who eagerly contended for a free Constitution.—The Independents, after their separation from the Presbyterians, adopted more liberal maxims of toleration, and though they did not extend its blessings with the same open hand to the Catholics and to the friends of Episcopacy, as they did to the Presbyterians and the Sectaries, they relaxed, if they did not altogether remove, the chains which had formerly bound them.

By the Restoration of Charles the Second, the Church of England regained that establishment which she had lost in his father's time; and happy it would have been, had she remembered in her prosperity, those lessons of moderation she might have learned from her former fall! Happy, had she dropped her resentments for former injuries, and

shown herself superior in justice and in mercy to those who, stimulated by her former persecutions, had overturned her constitution, and offered violence both to the persons and consciences of her sons ! She ought also to have remembered, that the Restoration itself, by which she recovered her power, was principally owing to the efforts of those who were not her children ; but who had bled equally with her, in consequence of their common errors.— Though the Act of Uniformity cannot justly be considered as an act of persecution, (for unquestionably we must allow the Church the right of binding, by regulations, her own ministers, a right necessary to the existence of every society,) yet if we consider it in its origin, as a principle of retaliation for former injuries, it was unchristian ; in the miseries it inflicted, it was unfeeling ; in the virulence of religious animosity which it produced, its issues were uncharitable ; and in the subtraction it made from the piety and learning of the Church, it was unwise and imprudent. By this measure, two thousand ministers of Christianity were, in one day, ejected from the Church ; and their families cast upon the world, without the smallest provision being made for the supply of their wants. Even the precedent which the Parliamentary party, with all its acts of injustice, had set, of allowing to the families of the Episcopal clergy, a fifth of each living, though the House of Peers did themselves the honour to propose it, was refused. The Book of Common Prayer, with new corrections, to which subscription was required, was not in readiness for the general perusal of those who were required to subscribe it, till the day appointed was past.—It afterwards appeared that the design of the measure was to disunite Protestants, and to subserve the cause of Popery. It has, in after times, met the reprobation of the wisest

and best friends of the Church of England. It was soon followed by another, called the Oxford, or the Five Mile Act. By this "It was enacted," says Hume, "that no dissenting teacher, who took not the non-resistance oath above mentioned, should, except upon the road, come within five miles of any corporation, or of any place, where he had preached after the act of oblivion. The penalty was a fine of fifty pounds, and six months imprisonment. By ejecting the non-conformist ministry from their churches, and prohibiting all separate congregations, they had been rendered incapable of gaining any livelihood by their spiritual profession. And now, under colour of removing them from places, where their influence might be dangerous, an expedient was fallen upon to deprive them of all means of subsistence. Had not the spirit of the nation undergone a change, these violences were preludes to the most furious persecution!"* The Act against Conventicles was likewise added to the other injuries done to dissenters. By this act, every person who was present in a dissenting assembly, where more than five were present, besides the family, was to be fined five shillings for the first offence, ten for the second; the preacher twenty pounds for the first offence, and forty for the second. The person in whose house the assembly met was to be fined in the same sum as the preacher. It was also enacted that should any dispute arise with regard to any part of the act, the judges should always explain it in the sense least favourable to conventicles, it being the intention of Parliament entirely to suppress them. "Such was the zeal of the Commons," says the writer formerly quoted,

* History of England, Vol. vii, p. 331.

“ that they violated the plainest and most established maxims of civil policy, which require that, in all criminal prosecutions, favour should always be given to the prisoner.”^a When the spirit and letter of the law breathed such injustice and tyranny, it is no wonder that the execution sometimes out-did the statutes themselves. The trials of Mr. Penn and of Mr. Baxter afford sufficient evidence that the fury of the Bench exceeded even the violence of the Parliament. The records of these scenes, and of such as the history of the Presbyterian Parliament presents, ought ever to be preserved by Englishmen, not for the purpose of loading one party with crimes, and exculpating another, but that all may equally hate tyranny and persecution, in every party,—and that all may appreciate the blessings of our free constitution, which venerates our liberties, both civil and religious, and secures the dispensation of righteous and merciful laws, in a righteous and merciful manner.

The succession of a Popish Prince, in the person of James, and the obvious tendency of all his measures to subvert the Church Establishment, awakened the reflecting part of that body to a sense of their real danger, and recalled them from imaginary alarms, to consolidate a fabric attacked on all sides, and threatening a fall. The Dissenters, who refused to take the oath of non-resistance, had, in the former reign, suffered very severe penalties; and a bill had passed the House of Lords to oblige the members of both houses, and all who held any office, to swear to the doctrine of passive obedience. Had this bill received the sanction of the legislature, (and as the whole

^a History of England, Vol. vii, p. 569.

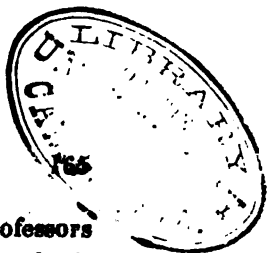
strength of the Church was exerted to carry it, nothing but the quarrel that took place between the two houses, could probably have thrown it out,) the ruin of the religious establishment, or national perjury, must have been the certain consequence; while James exerted the force of his prerogative to destroy it, and the hands of the other two branches of the legislature, and of every man in power, were tied up from defending it. So nearly had these mad measures brought the Church herself to the brink of a fatal precipice, that she owed her escape to her revolt from those very maxims which, with so much zeal, she had endeavoured, during the whole of the last reign, to impose upon the nation. By the united efforts of Churchmen and Dissenters she was, with difficulty rescued, by opposing a steady resistance to the plan that James had formed for her subversion, and for overthrowing the liberties of the country.

Writers who have animadverted on the perturbed times of the three reigns which preceded the Revolution, have, according to their different prejudices, been fired with indignation at the inroads of prerogative on the liberties of the subject; the subservience of the Church to the doctrines of political tyranny, and her intolerant spirit to those who separated, or who wished to separate from her communion: or they have denounced the outrages of popular assemblies against the divine right of Princes; the usurpation of Puritans and Separatists, and their subversion of Church and State, as the most flagrant enormities. Writers of the former class delight to dwell on the misconduct of the First Charles; his arbitrary government; his forced loans; ship money; his violation of the Petition of Right; the severity and cruelty of the Star-Chamber and High Commission Courts; his ruling without

Parliaments; the attempts of the Church to destroy the liberties of the Kingdom by raising the King above the law; and her relentless persecution of those who, for conscience sake, dissented from her. They also take care to fill the most prominent part of the picture with the persecuting edicts, and the unrelenting cruelties of Charles the Second's reign, which were prepared and exercised by the Church party: but the tyranny and sanguinary spirit of the Long Parliament, in the prosecution of Strafford and Laud; its destructive ambition, in seizing the legitimate prerogatives of the Crown; dethroning their Monarch, overturning the Church, proscribing her worship, and persecuting her Ministers; the hypocrisy and fanaticism which closed the scene, they either throw into the back ground, or pass over in silence.—The other class of writers begin their History of Charles the First's reign, with the meeting of the Long Parliament. The acts of tyranny and oppression, which for several years preceded it, and rendered the meeting of that Assembly necessary; the arbitrary courts they abolished; the bulwarks they opposed to despotic power; the security they gave to personal liberty; the rash and ill-advised conduct of Charles in the accusation of the five members, &c. are all either left out of the historic picture, or so shaded as not to attract the notice of the spectator. But the hand of an honest painter, to whom the violences of all parties are equally obnoxious, and who wishes particularly to warn and instruct that party to which, upon the whole, his attachments are the strongest, will neither seek to soften its errors, nor to apologize for its crimes; but will give them the strongest colouring, that they may be distinctly seen and avoided, as dangerous rocks, by the present and the future ages.

The absurd idea, that any system of civil or religious opinions is accountable for the follies or crimes of those who have been its professors, seems to be the mistake that lies at the bottom of all the mis-statements, which proceed from the partiality, or from the want of penetration of many political, as well as of many Ecclesiastical writers. If, in former ages, the religious doctrines of the Church of England were, accidentally, employed to destroy liberty, and to support arbitrary government; if they were disgraced by intolerance, when almost every other religious party was infected by the same pestilential disease, these circumstances can be no reproach to those principles, now that they are allied with a free state, and have extended their boughs to shelter and to shade men of every religious denomination.—If, in other times, Presbyterians have been inclined to [democratical doctrines, and have promoted rebellion against a government which denied them the rights of conscience, and which they thought incompatible with civil liberty; if, at that time, they fell into the common absurdity of refusing to others, the religious rights they demanded for themselves, what concern have Presbyterians of later times, who, ever since they enjoyed the privileges and liberties of men, have exhibited the most steady loyalty, and the strongest attachment to the government of their country? They are only so far concerned as to lament the crimes and follies of all parties, and to abhor those which stained the conduct of such as professed their principles, as much as they do the crimes and follies of any other party.—If the doctrines of the Independents were, at one time, united with levelling and republican maxims; if some persons of that society were among the regicides of Charles the First; if the leaders of that party, in acquiring political ascendancy,

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employed dissimulation and craft; and if some professors of their tenets, during the usurpation, ran into enthusiasm, what blame can attach to those who have succeeded to the religious principles, without any connexion with the follies or crimes of their predecessors? Many of the Independents may claim to have stood among the foremost in their attachment to Monarchy, ever since it was limited, and to the constitution, ever since it was detached from religious persecution. They are certainly entitled to say, that as they know no religious system with which ambition, extravagance, and deceit, may not be blended, they are sure that in the peculiarities of their creed, there are no doctrines particularly indulgent to such vices. On the doctrines of morality and the eternity of moral obligation, they maintain no obliquity from the general system of Christians.—The Baptists and every other denomination of Protestants, are entitled to the same apology. All of them renounce every pretension to infallibility in their churches, and every claim of determining the duties they owe to other men, by any other rule than that which they expect other men to observe towards themselves.

It is full time that men of all parties, political and religious, should discontinue the practice of charging each other with the offences of those who have been attached to their systems, the injustice of which conduct when applied to themselves, they can quickly discover. The dread of such charges has produced, in many instances, in all parties, effects of the most mischievous kind to society in general. It has disposed the blind advocates of every party, to aggravate or to soften, to colour, or to apologize for, facts, whether they are the monuments of virtue, or the records of crime. It has taught them, to

blast, by insinuating suspicions, the most tried integrity is, the partisans of an opposite party, and to canonize the follies and blunders of those, who have been numbered with them in the prosecution of the same cause. It has distorted the representations of history, by showing them through a false medium; and by detracting from their certainty, has lessened their value. It robs the philosophy of history of its practical lessons, the office of which is to collect these lessons, and to give them to the trumpet of fame; that so being emblazoned, the wisdom and the virtue of the ages that are past, may instruct and warn the present and the future; and by embodying the vices and crimes of men who are no more, it conjures up so many spectres to harrow up men's souls, and to deter them from foul deeds.

The Revolution, which was effected by the coalition of almost all parties, was yet attended with consequences extremely repulsive to the feelings, and harshly severe upon the condition of one part of the Church of England. From the time of Charles the First, many of her Bishops and Clergy had so fettered themselves with the doctrines of passive obedience and non-resistance, and had so often called those *spirits from the vasty deep* to play them as engines against the friends of liberty, that it was no wonder, when these apparitions stood in their way, that they did not immediately enlist themselves under the banners of freedom. When it came to their own turn to swallow those unpalatable doctrines, and their monarch expected that what they had taught so well, they would practise with equal dexterity, they found some difficulty in reconciling their former principles to their present safety. Resistance was the only expedient by which the horrors of Popery could be repelled, but

this weapon had so often been declared impious and treasonable, that it required a daring hand to unsheath it, and the first thrust was to stab to the heart a *beloved child*. It was no wonder if the courage of some revolted when the blow was to be struck, and if the palsied arm refused to wield the offensive dagger. It was no wonder, therefore, if those who, without examining political doctrines, had been serious in their professions of passive obedience, resolved to stick to their principles, at all hazards. Even the errors of honest men are entitled to some respect, or to some indulgence at least. We venerate the integrity of the Quaker, when we see his doctrines bind up his hands from resisting the spoliations of a plundering mob, whose fury he fears less than the violation of his principles. But when we behold him flying for protection to the use of the arms he has renounced, or calling in military aid, to repel force by force, from that moment he has forfeited all respectability of character.

There were unquestionably, at all times, many excellent men, true members of the Church of England, who were attached to the blessings of a free constitution. Liberty, indeed, to be courted, needs only to be distinctly seen, and when men are insensible to her charms, it generally is, because they view her with a malignant eye, as the mistress of a rival.—Even in their spite to the virgin face of liberty, the non-juring Bishops and Clergy were entitled to the praise of consistency. If they were her enemies in the day of her adversity, and when she was trampled in the dust, they also refused to hail her Queen, when she was seated upon a throne, and when many of her former persecutors mingled in her train, and swelled her notes of triumph. Several of

the afterwards deprived Bishops, had petitioned James to dispense with their making themselves parties to his measures, for the encouragement of popery, for which they were committed to the Tower, and brought to trial. This circumstance forms satisfactory evidence that, so far as they could without warping their principles, they were ready to support the doctrines of the Reformation. If they could not, (as many of those who retained their benefices, by renouncing their political principles, did,) undo in one moment what they had been rearing all their lives, their scruples entitle them to the name of conscientious men. Some of them were men of distinguished piety, and who, with the exception of the nonsensical doctrines of passive obedience and non-resistance, were, in every respect, ornaments of the Episcopal Rank, and an honour to their country. It would have reflected honour on the court of William and Mary, and on the whole legislature, when the forfeiture of their refusing the oaths was exacted, had provision been made to preserve them from poverty, or at least from indigence. One of them is said to have been reduced to the necessity of applying for charity at the door of his own Cathedral. But thus it often happens in every country, and in every party: men of delicate consciences starve, while those of large and robust consciences fatten on the spoils of their country.

The Revolution was followed by the Act of Toleration, which gives legal protection to the Dissenters, and secures those rights, without the quiet possession of which, society itself must be in a continual state of ferment and convulsion. Ever since the reign of Henry the Eighth, the kingdom had exhibited the most violent symptoms of disorder, and of some internal disease preying upon

its vitals, and disorganizing all its parts; and no state-physician had yet arisen, to discover the malady, or to prescribe the means of its cure. Whatever party had, in its turn, succeeded to the government of the political body, the regimen they prescribed served only to exasperate the morbid symptoms of the patient; and indeed they never seemed to have thought of any more effectual medicine, than a strong cordial to prevent immediate dissolution. The grand remedy was at last found, and having been applied, it has effectually eradicated the disease, and restored the patient to youthful vigour. Ever since the public exercise of religion has been freed from unnecessary restraints, the various denominations of Christians have harmoniously mingled in the mass of society, and lived as affectionate children of the State, and as dutiful subjects. How much soever they may differ in religious doctrines from the Church, they all respect her mildness and tolerant spirit, and it is seldom that even a religionist is found who does not respect her institutions, and even her Ministers, when they reverence themselves.

The Act of Toleration was indeed imperfect. It excluded from its protection Socinians, and all who denied the doctrine of the Trinity; and required subscription to those articles of the Church, which comprise the great doctrines of Christianity. This solecism in the legislation of a Christian state, which is bound by the strict maxims of its religion "to do to all as it would wish to be done by," has been attended with few, if with any violations of religious tolerance, and the spirit of the laws has supplied to Socinians the protection which their letter denied them. With respect to the civil magistrate, the important distinctions of a delicate, of a squeamish, of

an obstinate, of an ill-informed, of a pure, and of a superstitious conscience, are questions *coram non judice*, and therefore they must be remitted to an infallible tribunal. Society can only be the guardian of those rights, which the individuals of which it is composed have given up into its custody ; but the rights of conscience are what no man can surrender, without renouncing the authority of his Creator ; and a society, formed upon such a renunciation, would be a confederacy against the Governor of the Universe. Human society having for its end the protection of men's temporal rights, the surrender, of those, which run into an everlasting state, would be the sacrifice of the blessings of eternity, to the enjoyments of a moment ; or a flight from the sorrows of an hour, into torments of everlasting duration. As no rational, and consequently accountable creature, can give up the rights of conscience, as the belief in a Supreme Being forbids such a relinquishment, religious persecution proceeds upon a position which is the very quintessence of Atheism, " that human society is the highest tribunal to which man is amenable." Besides, as God has challenged to himself the character of the Supreme Judge, and is alone, by his Omniscience, qualified to search the heart, and to try the reins of the children of men, and to give to every man according to his works, every act of intolerance is an arrogant assumption of His right, and consequently an attempt to dethrone him, and to seize the prerogatives of his office. Thus persecution, which set out with a pretended veneration for the Deity, and a zeal for his honour, concludes with rebellion against his government, and a violation of his unalienable rights.

The awful respect to which the rights of conscience are entitled, has been generally expressed in our language, by

the word *Toleration*; a term, it must be confessed, of very inadequate signification, and which seems to insinuate, that there is some right in the society that tolerates, to impose uniformity by civil penalties. In this point of view, Toleration is neither honourable to the Legislature that tolerates, nor to the Dissenters who are tolerated. It is dishonourable to the Legislature, because it supposes Government to be invested with a Divine commission to enforce uniformity in religion, to which commission it is unfaithful, by neglecting to execute it. It is dishonourable to the Dissenters, because it represents what is strictly a *right*, and the most valuable right that man possesses, as only the boon of indulgence. All other rights may be *forfeited*, but this right is as *sacred* in the condemned *malefactor*, as in the most pious and virtuous man in the kingdom.

During the reign of King William and Queen Mary, in 1689, an attempt was made to obtain a Comprehension, by bringing those Dissenters into the Church, whose scruples would yield to a few alterations in the liturgy and ceremonies. Ten Bishops, and seventy other Divines were, by a commission under the Great Seal, empowered to meet and to propose such alterations in the Book of Common Prayer and Canons, as might be proper to lay before the Convocation. But the Lower House expressed a resolution not to enter into any debates with respect to alterations, and these conciliatory measures gained nothing but honour to those who proposed them. Upon a review of them, a good many years after, Bishop Burnet, in the conclusion of the History of his Own Times, speaks thus: "Our worship is the most perfect composition of devotion that we find in any Church, ancient or modern: yet the corrections that were agreed to, by

a Deputation of Bishops and Divines in the year 1689, would make the whole frame of our Liturgy still more perfect, as well as more unexceptionable; and will, I hope, at some time or other, be better entertained than they were then. I am persuaded they are such, as would bring in the much greater part of the Dissenters to the communion of the Church, and are in themselves desirable, though there were not a Dissenter in the nation." —p. 380.

The Act of Toleration passed without opposition from any quarter, and was the result of the combined experience of all Protestants, of the arts by which the enemies of the Reformation had succeeded in weakening its friends, by their mutual collision. In framing the act, it was proposed by some to make it temporary, that the prospect of its expiration might impose a restraint upon the Dissenters, to demean themselves so as to merit the continuation of it. As if the enjoyment of those rights with which every human being is vested, antecedent to society, ought to be suspended on the moderation of any religious body of men. So little, at that time, were the rights of conscience either understood or respected. Had the fate of this bill been protracted for a year or two, it is extremely probable that it never would have passed at all, either in that or in the following reign. The ill-humour of the clergy returning, with increased violence, after they had escaped the dangers that lately threatened them, many of them became dissatisfied with the Revolution itself, and enraged against the Dissenters, and the toleration they enjoyed. The unnatural heats and vapours exhaled from their violent passions, fermenting in the political atmosphere, exploded in a furious storm. The conductor which received this electrical fire, and conveyed

to the political body the shock that was felt to the extremity of the circle, was well fitted for the purpose. Henry Sacheverel, was a clergyman of weak intellects and wretched taste, but of passions boisterous and blustering. In a sermon preached at St. Paul's Cathedral, on the fifth of November, 1709, he discharged a torrent of scurrility on the Dissenters, reflected severely on the Toleration, the Ministers, and the lawfulness of resisting tyranny; and told his audience that the Church was violently attacked by her enemies, and feebly defended by her friends. He animated the people to stand up for the defence of the Church, for which he told them he sounded the trumpet, and desired them to put on the whole armour of God. Nor was this appeal to the passions of the mob made in vain, who unhappily mistaking the weapons of the devil for the armour of God, proceeded to murder, or to maim, such as refused to join in the shout, "The Church and Sacheverel." The pews of a Dissenting meeting-house were committed to the flames, and confusion and tumult were for some time triumphant. These disorders were occasioned by the trial of the incendiary, who had been impeached by the House of Commons. This mode of procedure being unhappily chosen, raised into temporary importance, a man whose name would disgrace the history of almost any party or sect. The High Church party, with whom Harley, afterwards Earl of Oxford, and prime minister to Queen Anne, secretly co-operated, spread a general alarm over the nation. "They gave it out boldly," says Bishop Burnet, "and in all places, that a design was formed by the Whigs, to pull down the Church; and that this prosecution was only set on foot to try their strength, and that upon their success in it, they would

proceed more openly.* These acts of deceit and violence were soon followed by a total change of ministry. The tried wisdom and patriotism of the Whigs, was succeeded by the rash and bigoted councils of a faction, enlisted in the service of the *pretender*, for whose succession to the crown they prepared the way, by attempting to destroy the civil and religious liberties of their country. By their influence, the bill against occasional conformity, a measure they had repeatedly, but without success, brought forward before, was passed. By this bill it was enacted, that persons in places of power and trust, and all the common councilmen in corporations, who should be present at any meeting for religious worship, where there were more than ten persons besides the family, in which the common prayer was not read, should, upon conviction, be liable to the penalty of forty pounds, and the forfeiture of their places of trust, or profit. They were also to continue incapacitated, till they should depose, that for a whole year together they had been at no conventicle. The man who can qualify himself for a place of trust, or profit, by occasional conformity, and yet take the name of a Dissenter, has certainly no great title either to consistency, or to delicacy of conscience; but it is impossible to conceive any other design this measure could subserve, than that of irritation and insult to the Dissenters. Its intention was soon after fully explained by another called the *Schism Bill*; which forbade Dissenters to instruct their own children, and required them, for the purpose of education, to put them into the hands of conformists. It also interdicted all tutors and

* History of His Own Times, p. 323.

schoolmasters from being present at any Dissenting place of worship. This bill had actually obtained the Royal Assent ; but the very day that this absurd and persecuting act was to be in force, Queen Ann died: King George I, who was sensible that the Dissenters had drawn these acts upon themselves by their firm adherence to the Protestant Succession, in his Illustrious House, in opposition to a Jacobite Ministry, that were sloping the way for the pretender, procured the repeal of them in the fifth year of his reign.

It should not escape the attention of those, who affect on all occasions to identify the office and name of Bishops, with arbitrary power and tyranny, that during the first two reigns, subsequent to the Revolution, the Episcopal Bench was filled by wise, moderate, and pious men. These opposed themselves, with great effect, to the violent measures of the Clergy, and long stemmed the impetuous torrent of their passions. The names of Tilletson and Burnet shine with a distinguished lustre in the list of those spotless Patriots, and will ever be embalmed in the memory of those who venerate the Civil and Religious liberties of mankind. Firmly attached to the constitution of the Church of England, and giving a decided preference to its government and rites, they indulged no spirit of acrimony against Dissenters. In them religion was associated with all the softer feelings, and the milk of human nature. They respected the integrity, and venerated the rights of those, whose religious sentiments differed from their own ; and in them zeal was always found to be united with charity. Such men constitute the strength and ornament, as intemperate men do the weakness and disgrace, of every political or religious body ; though the principles and actions of both,

are seldom reduced to their proper rank, or seen in a just point of view, till the actors themselves have left the stage of human life.

The doctrinal Articles of the Church, it has long been known, are far from possessing the approbation of all her Ministers ; though all who minister at her altars are obliged to declare their assent and consent to them. In 1772, a petition subscribed by a considerable number of the Clergy, was presented to the Parliament, requesting to be exempted from the subscription imposed by the laws. But the petition was rejected. Unless the whole frame of the Liturgy had been altered, it does not appear that the relaxation for which they wished, could have given any permanent quiet to the scruples of those who took the lead in that application. They who can subscribe to what they do not believe, may easily reconcile their consciences to forms of prayer, the spirit of which they do not feel, and the language of which they do not approve.

In the year 1800, in consequence of the Union between the Kingdoms of England and Ireland, their respective Churches, which had always been under the same form of Government, and had embraced the same doctrine of faith, and the same mode of worship, became united.

In 1811, by some misrepresentation, it would appear, of the judgment of the Court of King's Bench, an opinion was formed, that the Act of Toleration did not oblige the Magistrates, at the Quarter Sessions, to administer the oaths, and to grant a license to petitioners under that act, who were not the Ministers of congregations. Those who, for some time, made applications to the Quarter Sessions were, in most Counties, refused licenses, and thus a serious alarm, lest the rights of conscience

should be violated, was spread through the nation. A Bill was introduced into Parliament by Lord Sidmouth, for bringing under new regulations the toleration of Dissenting Ministers. It contained provisions with respect to teachers at large, or those not connected with congregations, which were likely to cut off those supplies, by which alone the wants of congregations can be fed. It also pretended to prescribe certain qualifications, in a literary point of view, necessary to entitle the applicant to a license. To support this measure, instances were adduced of men, who thought themselves qualified to act as teachers, who were not only ignorant of the grammar, but also of the orthography of their mother tongue. Nay, some examples were produced of men who had petitioned for a license to preach, who could neither read nor write. The absurdity of such men setting up for teachers was indeed sufficiently evident; and, foolish as mankind generally are, it is to be hoped that they would not easily find a congregation, excepting such (a thing barely possible) as were greater fools than themselves. Should such a thing take place, it is one of those evils against which society cannot, and no wise society will attempt to provide. In every free government, the rights of the most ignorant must be treated with the same respect as those of the most intelligent. The cottage of the illiterate peasant is as sacred in the eye of the law, and as inviolable as the habitation of the philosopher and the sage. That government which does not recognize the right of the former to choose his own religion, and even to propagate his religious opinions, can never give the latter a sure pledge of those blessings. Against the dangerous bill formerly mentioned, many respectable Clergymen were petitioners, and it was very properly thrown out.

Had it received the sanction of the Legislature, many would have been proud enough to disobey the law, and to contend for those rights which no Government can take away. The consequences would have been, the multiplication of imprisonments, and every sufferer would have called forth a host of candidates for the same honour. In a free country, persecution is sure to excite compassion for the sufferers, and to rouse the indignant feelings of men against the persecutors. The established religion bears the load of all the severities inflicted upon Dissenters, till its pillars are shaken to the very centre. A bill of a very different kind was afterwards brought into Parliament, and obtained the sanction of the Legislature. It was introduced by the Ministers of the Crown, and it is to be hoped will long remain a monument of their moderation and patriotism. It gives security to the Church, and liberty of conscience to the Dissenters; and fixes upon all a strong claim for gratitude to the most liberal and generous government in the world. By its provisions, Dissenting Ministers are obliged, only when they are called upon by the Magistrate, to give the test of their allegiance to the government, by taking the oaths. The Bench of Bishops gave, on that occasion, the most unequivocal proof of their attachment to the principles of religious liberty, and shed additional honour on their mitres. This is just as it should be. Kindness disarms the hostility of religious parties, and the union of firmness and moderation gives to an establishment a security, that the laws themselves are inadequate to supply.

By a bill passed in favour of the Socinians, in 1813, the penalties to which they, and other professors of religion who deny the doctrine of the Trinity, had been ex-

posed, were repealed, and the enjoyment of toleration may now be said to be complete.

Having finished our Remarks on the History of the United Churches of England and Ireland, we shall next attend to the WORSHIP of the UNITED CHURCH.

The Worship of the United Church is liturgical. It has long been the subject of dispute, whether the public worship of Christian Churches should be performed by extempore prayers, or by liturgical forms. Those who contend for extempore prayers, and against liturgical forms, argue, that though forms may be of use to children, and to such as are extremely ignorant, yet restriction to forms, either in public or in private, seems neither to be scriptural, nor lawful. If we look, say they, to the authority and example of Christ, and of his Apostles, every thing is in favour of extempore prayer. 'The Lord's Prayer, they observe, was not given to be a set form, exclusive of extemporary prayer. They further argue, that a form cramps the desires, and inverts the true order of prayer; making our words to regulate our desires, instead of our desires to regulate our words: that it looks as if we were not really convinced of our wants, when we want a form to express them: that it has a tendency to make us formal, and that it cannot be suited to the case of every individual. In answer to the charge brought against those who pray extempore, that they often fall into impious, or extravagant expressions, they observe, that this is neither generally, nor frequently the case, and that unprejudiced attention, to those who pray extempore, will convince us, that if their prayers be not so elegantly composed, as those of a set form, yet they are more

appropriate, and delivered with more energy and feeling.*

The arguments by which the use of a liturgy is justified are such as follow. Its friends argue that it is evident the worship of the Jews was liturgical. The first act of public worship, say they, recorded in their history, was the divine hymn composed by Moses, upon the deliverance of the Israelites by the destruction of the Egyptians in the Red Sea. This was sung by all the congregation, alternately; by Moses and the men first, and afterwards by Miriam and the women; which could not have been done, unless it had been a precomposed set form. David appointed the Levites *to stand every morning to thank and praise the Lord, and likewise at even.*—1 Chron. xxiii. 30. The same practice was afterwards observed in the temple of Solomon, and restored after the captivity, at the building of the second temple.—Neh. xii. 24, 45, 46. Now, say they, it is evident that this was done after a prescribed form. The whole Book of Psalms, they observe, consists of forms of prayer, indited by the Spirit of God, for the common use of the congregation, as sufficiently appears from the titles of many of the Psalms themselves. That the Jews did always worship God by set forms, is attested by Josephus and Philo, and proved by Dr. Hammond and Dr. Lightfoot: so that they think there can be no more reason to doubt that the Jews had, and used, a precomposed, settled liturgy, than that the Church of England has, and uses, the Book of Common Prayer.

Further, say they, that our Saviour continued in the communion of the Jewish Church, it is impossible for us

* See Buck's Theological Dictionary. Article, Prayer.

to doubt; and as the worship of the Church was conducted by a liturgy, and consisted of set forms, it necessarily follows that our Saviour joined in those liturgical forms, and consequently gave them the sanction of his authority, by giving them that of his practice. Our Saviour's Apostles and Disciples too, they observe, undoubtedly, as members of the Jewish Church, used the same forms till our Saviour's Ascension, and even after we find them repeatedly attending the worship of the synagogue, which was managed by their liturgy. To those arguments the advocates for extempore worship reply, that it is neither *reasonable* nor *scriptural* to look for the pattern of Christian Worship in the Mosaic dispensation, which, with all its rites and ceremonies, is now abrogated and done away.

Those who contend for the use of a liturgy in public worship argue, that our Saviour's Apostles, both during the time of his life with them, and after his ascension, used that form of prayer which he taught them, and which for that reason is called the *Lord's Prayer*. The word *αἰνέω*, in St. Matthew, vi. c. 9 v. may be rendered, they acknowledge, "*in this manner*," and consequently may be considered as a directory, or pattern; but in St. Luke, xi. c. 2 v. it is evidently, say they, used as a form—"When ye pray, *say*, Our Father, &c." The advocates of extempore prayer insist, that it was prescribed as a form, to continue only till the pouring out of the Holy Spirit should qualify them for the more enlarged and spiritual discharge of the duty of prayer. To this they reply, that upon the same pretext, Baptism and the Lord's Supper, and the most sacred institutions of Christianity, may be set aside. To another objection, that Christ afterwards commanded his disciples to pray in his name, and that this form of

prayer not having his name in it, must, by this injunction, be superseded; they answer, that to pray in Christ's name is to pray in a dependence on his merits and intercession, and consequently, that prayers may be offered through him, though he be not named. That our only title to call God our Father is, through the mediation of his Son, and therefore that address is certainly, though indirectly, in the name of Christ. It is objected again, by the advocates of extempore prayer, that we have no authority from scripture to affirm, that after the day of Pentecost our Saviour's Apostles ever used the Lord's Prayer as a form. To this argument they answer, that the silence of the Scripture might as well be brought as an argument to prove that the Apostles did not baptize in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, since the commandments by which the use of them is enjoined, are equally strict. They who argue for extempore prayer object, that if our Lord had intended this prayer to be used as a set form, he would not have added the doxology, when he delivered it at one time, as it is recorded in St. Matthew, and have omitted it when he delivered it upon another occasion, as in St. Luke. To this the friends of liturgical forms of prayer reply, that the objection concludes with as much force against the use of the Lord's Prayer as a directory, as against the use of it as an established form; and that from the circumstance of its being given with the doxology, in one of the Evangelists, and without it, in another, nothing more can be inferred, than that it may be used at different times, as a form, with the same variations.

They also have many testimonies from the Christian Fathers, which they adduce to prove, that in those early days of the Church, it was not only universally used as a

form of prayer, but acknowledged by the Church as an institution of Christ, and as universally obligatory. Such is the testimony of Tertullian, St. Syril of Jerusalem, St. Chrysostom, St. Austin, and of many others. The advocates of extempore prayers observe, that as we possess the Scriptures, the Church, in our times, is just as competent to judge on this subject as any of the Christian Fathers.

The advocates for set forms of prayer contend, that in the fourth chapter of the Acts, from the twenty fourth to the thirty first verse, we have evidently a form of prayer, used by the whole Church. When Peter and John reported to them the threats of the council, the sacred Historian records—"When they heard that, they lifted up their voice to God with *one accord*, and said, Lord, thou art God, &c." They observe that *quod unus, with one accord*, evidently signifies altogether—that the whole Church together lifted up their voice. Now, say they, you must either suppose that the whole congregation were at that moment inspired, not only with the same sentiments, but with the same words, or you must allow that this prayer was a precomposed form, suited to the state of persecution in which the Church at that time was. The answer commonly given to this argument is, that it is possible that this prayer might be offered up by one, in the name of the whole Church, who mentally joined with him, though not in an audible manner.

They who consider fixed forms as the most proper manner of public prayer, argue that, upon the supposition that extempore prayers had been in use in the Apostolical Churches, it is impossible to account for a change so great, so sudden, and so universal, having taken place, within so short a period after the age of the Apos-

ties. Within about a century and a half after the Apostolical age, it is certain, say they, that the use of liturgies was common, if not universal, in all Christian Churches. Now, if the mode of worship was changed from extempore to liturgical prayers, in the short intervening period, from the death of the Apostles, to about the middle of the second century, how came it to pass that so remarkable an innovation was introduced into the worship of God, without a single vestige being left in the records of antiquity, of such a change having ever been effected? Had such a change ever taken place, (many, unquestionably, would have opposed it, say they) it must have occasioned many disputes, and, in all probability, a division in the Church. The innovators could easily have been convicted of altering the form of Christian worship, and even the proposal of such alteration must have excited many jealousies, and much alarm. They observe, that the same mode of reasoning is generally used, and with much success, by Pædo-Baptists, to prove that infant baptism must have been practised by the Apostolical Churches, because, had it been an innovation it must have been attended, at its first introduction, with such disputes and divisions, that some traces of them must have found their way down to modern times. It must be confessed this is a strong presumptive argument, to which we do not remember of having seen a satisfactory answer given.

The existence of liturgies in the early progress of the Christian Church, ascribed to St. Peter, St. Mark, and St. James, the friends of liturgical worship consider, as another strong argument to prove that forms of prayer were used in the Apostolical Churches. They allow that these forms of prayer have been corrupted, by later

times, but the circumstance of that of St. James having had great authority in the Church of Jerusalem, in St. Cyril's time, who wrote a comment upon it, still extant, they think a thing of very considerable weight, to prove the existence of liturgies in the Apostolical Churches.* The friends of extempore prayers consider the existence of the fabulous and fictitious gospels, and epistles which were early circulated as the compositions of the Apostles, as a fact which takes off the whole force of this argument.



THE ORIGINAL BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER, AND THE ALTERATIONS MADE IN IT.

PRIOR to the Reformation, the Liturgy consisted partly of a collection of some ancient forms of prayer, which had been used in the second and third centuries of the Christian Era, and partly of those forms which had arisen out of the superstitions which, for a series of ages, had gradually crept into the Western Church. To the common people, the former were entirely useless, as the prayers were offered in Latin, a language unknown to those who had not the benefit of a learned education. In the Church of Rome it has been, and it still continues to be, a maxim, "that ignorance is the parent of devotion," consequently, that religion is not a reasonable service, and that

* See, on this subject, Mr. Wheatly's Introductory Discourse to his Rational Illustration of the Book of Common Prayer, of the Church of England.

a man prays with most sincerity, when he knows not for what he prays. One would have thought that the absurdity of a man's saying *Amen* to supplications, with the nature of which he was completely unacquainted, and which, for any thing he knew, might have been invocations of the Divine vengeance on his own head, would have forcibly struck every reflecting mind. But in those unhappy times, when the scriptures were deposited in cloisters, to be the food of worms; the minds of men, as the body of Gulliver was by the Lilliputians, were pinioned to the earth, by an innumerable quantity of almost invisible ligaments, which, though individually small, were yet collectively able to chain their faculties. The fact is worthy of our attention, that to this day the votaries of the Church of Rome continue bound with the same fetters, and offer up their prayers in a language they do not generally understand. Many of their forms of prayer were not only useless, but mischievous; as the superstitious acts with which they were mingled, the invocation of saints, and the adoration of the host and of images, involved the worshippers in the crime of idolatry.

In the reign of Henry the Eighth, though a breach had taken place between him and the Pope, little was done to correct the cumbrous system of superstition and folly. Provision was indeed made against continuing the absurdity of religious services in an unknown language. The prayers for the processions and the litanies were translated into English, and brought into public use.—In the first year of Edward the Sixth, the Convocation declared their opinion, that the Communion ought to be administered to all persons, in both kinds. In consequence of this, by an act of Parliament it was appointed to be so administered; and a Committee of Bishops and other learned

Divines was appointed, to compose an uniform order of Communion, according to the rules of Scripture, and the use of the Primitive Church. The Committee retired to Windsor Castle, and, within a few days, drew up that form which is printed in Bishop Sparrow's Collection; and which, in the following year, was brought into use. The same Committee was, by a new commission, invested with power to draw up public offices of religion, not only for Sundays and holidays; but also for baptism, confirmation, matrimony, the burial of the dead, and other special occasions. The office for the Communion was added, with several alterations and amendments. By them the whole Liturgy was completed. At the head of the Committee who composed the Liturgy, was Archbishop Cranmer, to whose piety, learning, and zeal, the Church of England, and indeed every Protestant Church, owes much. His conduct, in the high office which he filled, was a combination of prudence with the fervour of devotion, in harmony with discriminating wisdom; and of integrity, in unison with conciliating manners. If, in one scene of his life, he, like Peter, exhibited a deplorable instance of human weakness, like Peter he also showed in the last and most awful scene of it, a noble example of triumph over every object of human fear, over death clad with all his supernumerary terrors. Though the trial of his faith was even literally taken with fire, it was found unto praise, honour, and glory. During the life of that capricious tyrant, Henry the Eighth, he had to walk with caution, for he walked over fires treacherously covered with deceitful ashes, and like the Apostle St. Paul, was in death often. In the reign of Edward, he stood forth the champion, the apologist, the guardian, and the active conductor of the Reformation; and these excellencies

marked him out in the reign of Mary, as one of the first victims destined to bleed at the altar of Superstition. Ridley, at that time Bishop of Rochester, and afterwards of London, was also a member of the Committee by which the Liturgy was framed, a man of fine parts, distinguished equally by his piety, by his literature, and by his penetration and solidity of judgment; and who also, in Mary's reign, was condemned to the flames, and like another Elijah ascended to heaven in a fiery chariot. Five other Bishops, and six other eminent Divines, constituted the Committee by whom the Liturgy of the Church of England was compiled. "Thus," says an excellent writer, "was our excellent Liturgy compiled by martyrs, and confessors, together with divers other learned Bishops and Divines, and being revised and approved by the Archbishops, Bishops, and Clergy of both the provinces of Canterbury and York, was then confirmed by the King, and the three Estates in Parliament, A.D. 1548, who gave it this just encomium, viz. *which at this time, by the aid of the Holy Ghost, with uniform agreement is of them concluded, set forth, &c.*"*

Several objections having been made to the Liturgy, as too indulgent to superstition, Archbishop Cranmer, in the year 1551, proposed to have it reviewed, and, for that purpose called in the assistance of Martin Bucer, and Peter Martyr, two foreigners, whom he invited over to England. Some alterations were made in the service, and some additions were also made to it. Of the latter kind are the *sentences, exhortation, confession, and absolution*, at the beginning of the Morning and Evening Ser-

* Mr. Wheatly's Appendix to the Introductory Discourse, &c..

vices, which in the first Prayer Book began with the Lord's Prayer. The alterations consisted principally in retrenching several ceremonies, such as the use of oil in Baptism, the anointing of the sick, and prayers for the dead, which had been used both in the Communion Office, and in that for the Burial of the dead. The convocation of the Holy Ghost, in the consecration of the Eucharist, and the prayer of oblation which followed it, were laid aside. The *Habits* for the ministers of religion, which had been enjoined by the former Rubrick, were by this order to be discontinued, and at the end of the Communion service a Rubrick was added, to explain the reason of kneeling at the sacrament. With these additions and alterations, the Liturgy was again confirmed by Parliament. In the first year of Mary, both this and the former act made in 1548, were repealed, as a preparatory step to the restoration of the mass, and all the superstitions of Popery.

The accession of Elizabeth was soon followed by an act to reverse the repeal of the first year of Queen Mary, and another review was appointed to be taken of King Edward's Liturgies. For this service ten eminent Divines were selected, at the head of whom was Dr. Parker, afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury. Mr. Grindall, afterwards Bishop of London, and finally promoted to the see of Canterbury, formed one of the number. These Divines proposed the second book of King Edward, which was established by the three branches of the Legislature, with very few alterations. The last deprecation in the Litany in both the books of Edward, "From the tyranny of the Bishop of Rome and all his detestable enormities, &c." was left out. To the first petition for the Queen these words were added—"strengthen in the true wor-

ship of thee, in righteousness, and holiness of life." In the form of address to communicants in the dispensation of the sacrament, two sentences were added. "The body of our Lord Jesus Christ which was given for thee," and "the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ which was shed for thee; preserve thy body and soul to everlasting life." These were taken out of King Edward's first book. In his second book, these sentences had been left out, and "*take, eat and drink this,*" put in their place; but now, in that of Queen Elizabeth, both these forms were united. —The *Habits* enjoined by the first book of Edward, and prohibited by the second, were restored. At the end of the Litany, a prayer was added for the Queen, and another for the Clergy. The Rubrick that was added to the end of the Communion Office, in the second book of King Edward, was left out of Queen Elizabeth's Liturgy.

In this state the Liturgy continued, till the first year of James the First. After the conference at Hampdon-Court, between that Prince, with Archbishop Whitgift, and other Bishops and Divines on the one side, and Dr. Reynolds, with some other Puritans on the other, some forms of Thanksgiving were added at the end of the Litany, and an addition was made to the Catechism, on the subject of the Sacraments. The Catechism before that time ended with the answer to the question, which immediately follows the Lord's Prayer. In the Rubrick, in the beginning of the office for private baptism, the words "lawful minister" were inserted, to prevent midwives or laymen from presuming to baptize.

After the Restoration of Charles the Second, in 1661, a commission was issued to empower twelve of the Bishops, and twelve Presbyterian Divines, to consider the objections that had been made against the Liturgy, and to make

such reasonable and necessary alterations as they should jointly agree upon. Nine assistants were added on each side, to supply the place of such of the twelve principals, as should happen to be absent. The commissioners had several meetings at the Savoy, but, with their different prejudices, the subjects of discussion admitted of no easy compromise. The one party felt little disposition to concede or conciliate, and the other as little to soften their asperities. Repulsive in their sentiments, and not very accommodating in their manners, though there were excellent men on both sides, the controversy seems to have been, not who should esteem each other most highly in love for their work's sake, but what party should, with the most rigid stiffness, reject the claims of their former opponents. Had they been mutually disposed to make some sacrifices of their animosities, to the interests of vital religion, the wounds of which had long bled, and which was now convulsed in every nerve, by the blows she had received from all parties, in their mutual collision in the dark, they had erected at once a monument to their own piety, and a temple into which the quiet of the land might have entered, and worshipped in sweet counsel and fellowship. Some of the Bishops, it now appears, were desirous to prevent an union; and eagerly sought an opportunity of troubling the waters, not for the purpose of healing the divisions of Christians, but of embittering them. The Puritans also exhibited a disposition, too much calculated to rouse and to irritate the feelings of the Church, which required rather to be softened than to be enflamed. The dispute between them was not about the superior excellence of a Liturgy, or of extempore prayer; but whether the Liturgy of the Church of England should be continued, or give place

to one entirely new. Had some corrections and alterations in the Liturgy been proposed, to meet the wishes of those whose religious scruples were hurt by ceremonies, or by modes of expression which they could not approve, and which they desired to be removed, the request of the Presbyterians would have presented, on the face of it, a strong and reasonable claim. But by an unaccountable act of that most excellent man, Mr. Baxter, who offered a new liturgy of his own, to be substituted in the place of the authorized one, all hopes of accommodation were disappointed. Thinking highly, as the author does, of the eminent piety, distinguished talents, and tried wisdom of that Apostolical man, he finds it difficult to conceive that the combined powers and unctions of all the worthy men at whose head he acted, were equal to the production of liturgical forms, worthy even to be compared, as a whole, with the Liturgy of the Church of England. The Liturgy of the Church has laid under contribution the collected piety and devotion of Christians, from the times of the Christian Fathers, down to those in which it was framed. It has collected, not only the rich harvest of the Reformation, but gleaned the choicest fruits from the vineyard of Israel in every age. Like every thing human, that Liturgy is susceptible of correction, and consequently of improvement, in some of its parts, and were a wise and temperate hand applied to make a few alterations, it might be rendered the most perfect of human compositions. But where shall hands be found sufficiently pure, hearts sufficiently devout, and heads sufficiently wise and temperate, to which the deposit may be entrusted, with a confident expectation, that by their labours it shall be restored with the improvement of two or three of its offices, and without any

diminution of its general worth and excellence? The spirit it breathes is that of devotion, resting upon Evangelical principles, and animated by a pure flame kindled at the altar of God. It directs the eye of the worshipper to the only hope of man, as a fallen and guilty creature, the Atonement and Intercession of the Son of God; to the only source, from whence the Restoration of our corrupted natures, to the image and love of our Maker, can arise,—the influences of the Holy Ghost. It speaks that genuine language of humility which becomes the feelings and the lips of a creature, who has in himself the sentence of death, and yet the language of ardent gratitude, which becomes him who is begotten again to a lively hope, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ. It is equally distinguished by its comprehension, and its compression, by its simplicity and its sublimity, by its ease and its elegance, by its spirituality and its rationality, by the correctness of its doctrines, and the perspicuity of its language. It unites majesty with plainness; solemnity with the gentlest flow of diction; the impassioned eloquence of the heart, with the chastest elocution of sentiment. It is vigorous without being harsh, and calculated to warm, without overpowering, the religious feelings.—Without entering into the question, whether public prayer is best conducted by liturgical forms; by a Directory such as that of the Presbyterians in Scotland, in which the heads of devotion are suggested, and left to be filled up by extemporary expressions; or by supplications, without any previous adjustment, as by the Independents, the author cannot withhold the just tribute of his admiration of the Liturgy of the Church of England, in general, as a noble composition. Too much weight has often been placed on the mode of prayer, both by the advocates of free and

extempore prayer, and by those who plead for precomposed forms. In their turns they have argued, as if the Spirit of prayer were exclusively confined to the different modes for which they contend. And yet, surely, this is a subject on which men of the most exalted piety have held opposite opinions. Humility certainly requires, that, when we form our judgments on this head, whatever our decision for ourselves be, we take care never to arraign the motives, or to impeach the devotion of those who have come to an opposite conclusion. It is neither because we pray in the words of a precomposed Liturgy, nor because we present our supplications to our Heavenly Father, in the words with which our present sentiments and feelings clothe them, that our petitions will either obtain success, or fail of obtaining it. Our prayers will be heard or rejected as we present them with humble, contrite, and believing; or with proud, impenitent and disbelieving, hearts; with a reliance on the Saviour's Atonement and Intercession, or with a dependence on our own imaginary merit and goodness. When the soul rises to the spirit of prayer, in what manner soever our supplications are expressed, whether in liturgical forms, or in extemporary language, it has fellowship with the Father, with the Son, and with the Holy Ghost. When the spirit of devotion is wanting, the winds will disperse our prayers, howsoever expressed, and they will never reach the throne of God.

It is equally a breach of the law of charity, when the Presbyterian or the Independent represents the worship of the Church of England, not as the prayers of its members, but as their reading of prayers, and when the Churchman represents a prescribed form, as absolutely necessary to the reasonable services of religion, and ex-

temporary prayers as necessarily crude and impertinent. Though the form of prayer meet the eye, when the energies of devotion penetrate our hearts, the holy fire burns within us, and the prayers are not less our own than when we immediately conceive, and then clothe our petitions in the language which the fervor of the moment supplies. He must have no extended knowledge of the worship of Dissenters, who has not often, whatever his sentiments may be with respect to the comparative excellence of liturgical or extemporary prayer, given his hearty Amen to petitions expressed in simple, but in correct language, which proceeding from the heart, have made his own heart to burn within him. It is not even decent that Christians, from the circumstance of devotion being conducted by a Liturgy, should represent the prayers of other Christians as necessarily vapid and dead. Nor is it decent that those who employ a Liturgy in their addresses to the throne of Divine Grace, should represent all extemporary prayers as strange fire on the altar of God, and as the jargon of enthusiasm, calculated neither to elevate the affections nor to expand the heart. Let the advocates of these two different modes of worship, (if they think it necessary again to travel over the ground which has so often been gone over, on both sides, before), show us, if they can, from Scripture and from reason, which is the more excellent way ; but let the law of charity and kindness dwell upon their hearts and lips. The Christians whose minds are best informed, whose taste is most spiritual and refined, whose devotion is the most ardent, and whose judgment is the most acute, are always found to be the most candid in judging the conduct of others, in those cases in which no express Divine precept is interposed. On the other hand, no men are so precipitate, so

loud and censorious in judging others, as those whose incapacity, whose angry passions, and the insincerity of whose hearts, render them the most incompetent to decide on such subjects.

The Conference at the Savoy broke up without effecting any thing, and the different parties separated with minds more alienated from each other, and with tempers more inflamed and exacerbated, by their acrimonious disputes. Some alterations were proposed by the Episcopal Divines, which, in the May following, were agreed to by the whole Clergy in Convocation. The principal of these were, that several *lessons* in the Calendar, were changed for others that were reckoned more proper for the days; the prayers upon particular occasions were separated from the Litany: and the two prayers to be used in the Ember-weeks; the prayer for the Parliament; that for all conditions of men, and the General Thanksgiving, were added. Some of the Collects were also altered; and the Epistles and Gospels were taken out of the last translations, which formerly had been given in the old translation of the Bible. The office for the Baptism of those of riper years; and the Forms of Prayer to be used at Sea, were added. Finally, the whole Liturgy was at that time brought to its present condition, and on the twentieth day of December, 1661, it was unanimously subscribed by both Houses of Convocation of both Provinces. In March following, it was brought into the House of Lords, and an act for its establishment was passed by both Houses of Parliament.*

* The facts of this Statement are mostly taken from Mr. Wheatly's Appendix to the Introductory Discourse Concerning the Common Prayer.

OBJECTIONS TO THE LITURGY.

SOME have objected to the Absolution, that it advances a claim in the Priest who pronounces it to the power of forgiving sins, a power which the Clergy of the Church of Rome arrogate to themselves. To this objection, the friends of the Liturgy reply, that it contains nothing more than that absolution, which in almost every page of the Gospel, is declared by God himself. "Almighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who desireth not the death of a sinner, but rather that he may turn from his wickedness and live; and hath given power and commandment to his Ministers, to declare and pronounce to his people, being penitent, the Absolution and Remission of their sins: He pardoneth and absolveth all them that truly repent, and unfeignedly believe his holy Gospel." In King Edward's second Common Prayer Book, and in all the other books till the Restoration of Charles the Second, the word in the Rubrick, was *Minister*, and not Priest. But in the review of the Liturgy, which followed the Conference at the Savoy, Minister was struck out and *Priest* inserted in its place. From this alteration it appears, that those who are only in Deacon's orders are not competent to use this part of the service.

Objections have been made to the Responses, or short sentences in which the congregation answer the minister, as inconsistent with the simplicity of worship. The friends of the Liturgy answer, that this alternate manner

of worship is that, with a view to which many of the Psalms are evidently composed (take the twenty fourth Psalm as an instance), and that the Fathers assure us, that in all the old Liturgies the first Christians used such responses. "The design of them is," says Mr. Wheatly, "by a grateful variety to quicken the people's devotions, and to engage their attention: for since they have their share of duty they must expect till their turn come, and prepare for the next response: whereas when the Minister does all, the people naturally grow sleepy and heedless, as if they were wholly unconcerned."*

The charge of vain repetition has likewise been brought against the Liturgy, and to this charge its friends reply, that "to call our repetitions vain is to beg the question. The fact is, that the repetition alluded to in Scripture (Matthew, vi. 7) was that of an unmeaning jargon—as the Hindoos in our own times are said, as a part of their worship, to repeat the thirty thousand names of their idols. But is such the character of our repetitions? The sole repetition we believe charged upon us is, that of the Lord's Prayer,—a repetition valuable to the devout mind, as a means of ensuring our once at least offering it with undistracted attention; our substituting our great Advocate again and again for ourselves, at the mercy seat of God; and of not merely praying in his name, but as it were employing his person to represent us at the bar of God. Nor is this all. It is neither true in philosophy nor in fact, that devotion abhors repetition. Strong emotions of pain, or of pleasure, as is well known to the philosophical examiner, often stifle the inventive powers; and as to

* Order for Morning and Evening Prayer, Section 7th.

the fact, Christ himself in his agony, addressed his Father three times in nearly the same words."*

Many of the Dissenters have strongly objected to the lessons taken from the Apocrypha, because those books are neither considered as canonical by the Church which directs them to be read, nor by Protestants in general. The advocates for the Liturgy observe, that several of the Apocryphal books were, by the Council of Carthage, recommended to be read publicly in the Church, and that from the testimony of several Christian writers it appears, that the same respect was paid to them in later ages. "In conformity to so general a practice, the Church of England still continues the use of these books in her public service : tho' not with any design to lessen the authority of Canonical Scripture, which she expressly affirms to be the only rule of faith : declaring that *the Church doth read the other Books for example of life and instruction of manners, but yet doth not apply them to establish any doctrine.* Nor is there any one Sunday in the whole year, that has any of its lessons taken out of the Apocrypha. For as the greatest assemblies of Christians are upon those days, it is wisely ordered that they should then be instructed out of the undisputed word of God. The lessons out of the Apocrypha (except such of them as are assigned to the festivals of the Saints) being all reserved to the week days in *Autumn*, when, by reason of the harvest in the country, and the absence of those, who have most leisure, in the town, the congregations are generally the thinnest."†

The Creed of St. Athanasius, which contains damna-

* Christian Observer, for January, 1813.

† Mr. Wheatly on the Order of Morning and Evening Prayer. Section 10th.

tory clauses, or clauses which assert the everlasting damnation of all who do not believe the doctrine of the Trinity, and which is ordered to be read thirteen times every year, in every parish Church in England and Ireland, has given occasion to much invective from Unitarian Dissenters, who reprobate the uncharitableness of devoutly fulminating Anathemas against those, who cannot embrace a doctrine they think pregnant with contradictions, and especially when incumbered with definitions and distinctions still more perplexing and unsatisfactory. The practice of many Clergymen who subscribe it, and who read it in the solemn worship of God, and yet are not ashamed to publish to the world, that they not only do not believe its damnatory clauses, but condemn them as presumptuous, has given much just offence to all men of integrity and candour. Were any man to do the same thing, in violating every dictate of sincerity, in a Court of Justice, or in transacting the ordinary business of society, which these men do in the offices of Religion, and in the presence and worship of Almighty God, their conduct would meet the severest reprehension from every man of common honesty. The Unitarians say, that this Creed bears falsehood on its very face, as it claims to be the Creed of St. Athanasius ; whereas the learned agree that it was unknown to the Christian world for some centuries after his death ; though they are not unanimous in their opinions, with respect to the person who composed it. But with this question, he who subscribes, and he who reads the Creed, as a part of the Church service, has nothing to do ; for in the Rubrick it is only said to be *commonly called the Creed of St. Athanasius*. The doctrine which it contains is allowed by all the Orthodox to be Scriptural

and sound, though some of them think the distinctions too subtle and nice, to command the rational assent of an ordinary congregation. Dean Swift speaking of it, says, "This Creed is now read at certain times in our Churches, which although it is useful for edification to those who understand it, yet since it contains some nice and philosophical points, which few people can comprehend, the bulk of mankind is obliged to believe no more than the Scripture doctrine, as I have delivered it, because that Creed was intended only as an answer to the Arians in their own way, who were very subtle disputers."*

Bishop Burnet, in his exposition of the Eighth Article, observes, "There is one great difficulty that rises out of several expressions in this Creed, in which it is said that *whosoever will* be saved must believe it; that the belief of it is *necessary to salvation*; and that such as do not *hold it pure and undefiled*, shall without doubt *perish everlastingly*; where many explanations of a mystery hard to be understood are made indispensably necessary to salvation; and it is affirmed that all who do not so believe must perish everlastingly." The Bishop then proceeds to state the answer given by the most eminent men of the Church, so far as his memory could recollect, which is this; "That these condemnatory expressions are only to be understood to relate to those who, having the means of instruction offered to them, have rejected them and have stifled their own convictions, holding the truth in unrighteousness, and choosing darkness rather than light. Upon such as do thus reject this great article of the Christian doctrine, concerning one God and Three Persons,

* Sermon on the Trinity.

Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; and that other concerning the Incarnation of Christ, by which God and man were so united as to make one Person, together with the other doctrines that follow these, are those Anathemas denounced; not so as if it were hereby meant that every man who does not believe this, in every tittle, must certainly perish, unless he has been furnished with sufficient means of conviction and that he has rejected them, and hardened himself against them." It cannot escape the notice even of a superficial reasoner, that the Creed affirms absolutely and universally, what the Bishop says the most eminent Divines of the Church conditionally, and with several limitations and exceptions, admit, that such as do not hold the doctrines of the Trinity pure and undefiled shall perish everlastingly. The explanation and defence therefore contradict the damatory clauses of the Creed.—The Bishop afterwards observes, that "We may believe that some doctrines are necessary to salvation, as well as that there are some commandments necessary for practice; and we may also believe that some errors as well as some sins are exclusive of salvation, all which imports no more than that we believe that such things are sufficiently revealed, and that they are necessary conditions of salvation; but by this we do not limit the mercies of God to those who are under such darkness as not to be able to see through it, and to discern and acknowledge these truths."—It is no wonder that Archbishop Tillotson, in his letter to the Bishop on this subject said, "The account given of Athanasius's Creed seems to me no-wise satisfactory." No man can be satisfied, with what it is evident the Bishop was so little satisfied with himself, that his comment contradicts his text. The Archbishop then proceeds to say, "I wish we were well

rid of it." Chillingworth observes, "That the damning sentences in St. Athanasius's Creed (as we are made to subscribe it) are false, and also in a high degree presumptuous and schismatical." The opinion of this great man probably was, when he wrote this censure of the Creed, verging towards Socinianism, in which belief it is certain that he died, and consequently the doctrine of the Creed was nearly as offensive to him as its damnatory clauses.

Even Bishop Horsley, the able Champion of Orthodoxy and of Evangelical religion, disapproved of the damnatory clauses of the Creed. Bishop Tomline, in his *Elements of Theology*, speaking of it says, "Though I firmly believe that the doctrines of this Creed are all founded in Scripture, I cannot but conceive it to be both unnecessary and presumptuous to say, that except every one do keep them whole and undefiled, without doubt he shall perish everlastingly."*

On the other hand, the judicious Hooker observes, that "The very Creed of *Athanasius*, and that sacred Hymn of Glory (the Doxology), then which nothing doth sound more heavenly in the ears of faithful men, are now reckoned as superfluities, which we must in any case pare away, lest we cloy God with too much service. Is there in that Confession of Faith, any thing which doth not at all times edify and instruct the attentive hearer? or is our faith in the blessed Trinity, a matter needless, to be so oftentimes mentioned and opened in the principal part of that duty which we owe to God, our publick prayer? Hath the Church of Christ, from the first be-

* Vol. II, p. 222.

ginning, by a secret universal instinct of God's Spirit, always tied itself to end neither sermon nor almost any speech of moment which hath concerned matters of God, without some special words of honour and glory to that Trinity, which we all adore : and is the like conclusion of Psalms become now at length an eye-sore or a galling to their ears that hear it?" Speaking afterwards of the blasphemies of the Arians, Samosatenians, Tritheists, Eutychians, and Macedonians, he says, "who to hatch their heresie, have chosen those Churches as fittest nests where Athanasius's Creed is not heard."*

The venerable Bishop Beveridge thus speaks of the Athanasian Creed. "This incomparable Creed some think *Anastatius*, others *Eusebius Vercellensis*, others some learned *Frenchman* made ; but the most and the ancientest ascribe it to *Athanasius*. And truly though we cannot produce any certain argument from whence to prove it, yet this we know, that there is nothing in it (especially in the Greek copies) but what is consonant to his other works ; and that it hath been received in the Church under his name for above these four hundred, yea for above these eight hundred years together. For Hincmarus that lived Anno Domini 800, commands his Presbyters, 'that every one would commit to his memory the words of *Athanasius* concerning Faith, the beginning whereof is, *Whosoever will be saved*, and understand the sense of it, and so be able to pronounce it in common words.'

"But howsoever, whether Athanasius was the author of it or no, be sure the Creed before rehearsed is the Creed that goes under his name, and by consequence that which

* Ecclesiastical Polity, Book v.

we are to understand in this article by Athanasius's Creed, it going under that name, as in others, so in our Liturgy in particular. And it containing nothing but what is, somewhere or other in these Articles proved by Scripture, reason, and the Fathers; the doctrine of it must needs be received as true and consonant to the word of God.*

Mr. Wheatly, in his Rational Illustration of the Book of Common Prayer, observes, "Whether this Creed was composed by Athanasius or not, is matter of dispute. In the Rubrick before it, as enlarged at the Review, it is only said to be commonly called the Creed of St. Athanasius: but we are certain, that it has been received as a treasure of inestimable price, both by the Greek and Latin Churches for almost a thousand years.

"As to the *matter* of it, it condemns all ancient and modern heresies, and is the sum of all Orthodox Divinity. And, therefore, if any scruple at the denying *salvation* to such as do not believe these articles, let them remember, that such as hold any of those fundamental heresies are condemned in Scripture: from whence it was a primitive custom, after a confession of the orthodox faith, to pass an anathema against all that denied it. But, however, for the ease and satisfaction of some people who have a notion that this Creed requires every person to assent to, or believe, every verse in it on pain of *Damnation*; and who therefore (because there are several things in it which they cannot comprehend) scruple to repeat it for fear they should anathematize, or condemn themselves; I desire to offer what follows to their consideration, viz. That however plain and agreeable to

* Exposition of the Thirty Nine Articles. Article viii.

reason every verse in this Creed may be ; yet we are not required, by the words of the Creed, to believe the whole on pain of *damnation*. For all that is required of us as *necessary to salvation*, is, that *before all things we hold the Catholic Faith ; and the Catholic Faith is*, by the third and fourth verses explained to be *this, that we worship one God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity ; neither confounding the Persons, nor dividing the substance*. This therefore is declared necessary to be believed : But all that follows from hence to the twenty sixth verse, is only brought as a proof and illustration of it ; and therefore requires our assent no more than a sermon does which is made to prove or illustrate a text. The text we know is the word of God, and therefore necessary to be believed ; but no person is, for that reason bound to believe every particular of the sermon deduced from it, upon pain of damnation, though every tittle of it may be true. The same I take to be in this Creed : The belief of the *Catholic Faith* before mentioned, the Scripture makes necessary to salvation, and therefore we must believe it : but there is no such necessity laid upon us to believe the illustration that is there given of it ; nor does the Creed itself require it : for it goes on in the twenty sixth and twenty seventh verses, in these words, *So that in all things as is aforesaid, the Unity in Trinity, and the Trinity in Unity is to be worshipped : He therefore that will be saved, must thus think of the Trinity*. Where it plainly passes off from that illustration, and returns back to the fourth and fifth verses, requiring only our belief of the Catholic Faith, as there expressed, as necessary to salvation, viz. That One God, or Unity in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity is to be worshipped. All the rest of the Creed, from the

twenty seventh verse to the end, relates to our Saviour's *Incarnation* which indeed is another essential part of our faith, and as necessary to be believed as the former; but that being expressed in such plain terms, as none, I suppose, scruple, I need not enlarge any further."*

Mr. Simeon, a late commentator on the Liturgy, in his four Discourses preached before the University of Cambridge, in November, 1811, applies the damnatory clauses only to the general doctrine of a Trinity in Unity, in much the same manner as Mr. Wheatly, and not to all the explanations given in the Athanasian Creed. "After all," says Mr. Simeon, "I confess that if the same candour and moderation that are observable in all other parts of the Liturgy had been preserved here, it would have been better. For though I do verily believe that those who deny the doctrine of the Trinity are in a fatal error, and will find themselves so at the Day of Judgment, I would rather deplore the curse that awaits them, than denounce it, and rather weep over them in my secret chamber, than utter anathemas against them in the house of God."—p. 77. The man who believes the denying of the Trinity to be a fatal error may consistently both subscribe and use the Athanasian Creed, though he may think it would have been better not to have added the damnatory clauses; but he who considers the rejection of the Trinity as perfectly consistent with a man's being a Christian, can neither subscribe the Athanasian Creed, nor read it as a part of the worship of God, without being guilty of the most awful prevarication.

We shall only further, on this subject, give the senti-

* Section 15th.

ments of Dr. Haweis, "Athanasius was firm in the truth and could not yield a tittle in point of doctrine; but he was no such bigot as he is represented, nor was he uncharitable. The truths of God will not bear accommodation to a fancied candour, or charitableness of judgment. I may possess the kindest spirit, and practise the fullest exercise of toleration and forbearance, and yet decisively declare that except a man believe the Catholic Faith he cannot be saved. In my view the damnatory clauses of the Creed which bears his name breathe the noblest exercise of true Christian charity."*

Besides the observation of the Lord's day, the Church of England requires of her members the celebration of several holy-days, commemorative either of special blessings, connected with the Redemption, or of the Apostles and Martyrs, who, either by their doctrine and lives, were the lights of the world, or sealed the truths of Christianity with their blood.—To the observation of holy-days the Presbyterians particularly object, as a superstitious custom, and as the interposition of human authority to make that a part of religion, which no commandment of God has made any part of it. They observe that all legislation in the Church of God belongs to Christ as the King of his Church, and that the very claim is the Usurpation of an authority, that belongs only to Him. To this objection the Church of England-man replies that "The Church hath set apart some days yearly, for the more particular remembrance of some special acts and passages of our Lord, in the Redemption of mankind; such as are his *Incarnation* and *Nativity*, *Circumcision*,

* Impartial History of the Church of Christ, Vol. 1, p. 307.

Manifestation to the Gentiles, Presentation in the Temple; his Fasting, Passion, Resurrection, and Ascension; the sending of the Holy Ghost, and the Manifestation of the Sacred Trinity. That the observation of such days is requisite, is evident from the practice both of Jews and Gentiles. Nature taught the one and God the other, that the celebration of solemn Festivals was a part of the public exercise of religion. Besides the feasts of the *Passover*, of *Weeks*, and of *Tabernacles*, which were all of Divine appointment, the *Jews* celebrated some of their own institutions, viz. the feast of *Purim*, and the Dedication of the Temple, the latter of which even our blessed Saviour himself honoured with his presence.

“As to the celebration of Christian Festivals, they (the first Christians) thought themselves as much obliged to observe them as the Jews were to observe theirs. They had received greater benefits, and therefore it would have been the highest degree of ingratitude to have been less zealous in commemorating them. And accordingly we find that in the very infancy of Christianity some certain days were yearly set apart, to commemorate the *Resurrection* and *Ascension* of Christ, the *coming of the Holy Ghost*, &c. and to glorify God by an humble and grateful acknowledgment of these mercies granted to them at those times. Which laudable and religious custom so soon prevailed over the universal Church, that in five hundred years after our Saviour, we meet with them distinguished by the same names we now call them by; such as *Epiphany*, *Ascension-day*, *Whitsunday*, &c.

and appointed to be observed on those days, on which the Church of England now observes them."*

In the celebration of the Holy Communion, Communicants are required by the Rubrick to receive it in a kneeling posture, which injunction was strongly condemned by the Puritans, and is still objected to by the Presbyterians and other Protestant Dissenters. The objectors proceed upon this principle, that the practice is superstitious, and having the appearance of offering adoration to the elements, has a tendency to favour the Popish doctrine of Transubstantiation. To these objections the friends of the Liturgy reply, that they are sufficiently repelled by the declaration at the end of the Communion Service, which is sufficient to remove every scruple of that kind.

"The Communicants are enjoined whilst they receive this blessed sacrament to be *all meekly kneeling*. What posture the Apostles received it in is uncertain; but we may probably conjecture that they received it in a posture of adoration. For it is plain that our Saviour blessed and gave thanks both for the bread and the wine; and prayers and thanksgivings, we all know, were always offered up to God in a posture of adoration, and therefore we may very safely conclude that our Blessed Saviour, who was always remarkable for outward reverence in devotion, gave thanks for the bread and the wine in an adoring posture. Now, it is very well known, that it was a rule with the Jews to eat of the Passover to satiety: and therefore since they had already satisfied

* Mr. Wheatly's Rational Illustration, &c. of the Sundays and Holy-days, Chap. v, Sect. 2.—See also, on this subject, Hooker's Ecclesiastical Polity, Book v, Sect. 69, 70, 71, 72.

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hunger, they cannot be supposed to have eaten or drank so much of holy Eucharist as that they needed repose while they did it: and since we have already hinted they rose from their seats to bless the bread, it cannot be imagined that, without any reason, they would resolve to sit down again during the moment of eating it. And then, though they rose immediately a second time at the blessing which was performed, before the delivery of the cup, that they immediately sat down again to taste of the wine, as if they could neither eat nor drink the smallest quantity without sitting. This indeed does not amount to a demonstration, but is yet a very probable conjecture; and shows how groundlessly they argue, who from the Apostles eating the Passover sitting, or leaning upon the left side (which was the table-gesture among those nations), conclude that they eat the Eucharist in the same posture, because it was celebrated at the same time.

“ But besides, we may observe that the *Passover* itself was at the first institution of it, commanded to be eaten *standing* and in *haste*, to express the haste they were in to be delivered out of their slavery and bondage: but afterwards when they were settled in the Land of Promise, they eat it in a quite contrary posture, viz. sitting, or lying down to it, as to a feast, to signify that they were then at rest and in possession of the Land. And with this custom (though we do not find any where that it was ever commanded, or so much as warranted by God) did our blessed Saviour comply, and therefore, doubtless, thought that the alteration of the circumstances was a justifiable reason for changing the ceremonies. But was it ever so certain that a Table-gesture was used at the institution of the Eucharist; yet it is very reasona-

ble, since the circumstances of our blessed Saviour are now different from what they were at the institution, that our outward demeanour should also vary. The posture which might then be suitable in the Apostles, is not now suitable in us. While he was corporally present with them, and they conversed with him as Man, without any awful dread upon them which was due to him as the Lord of Heaven and Earth, no wonder if they did use a Table-posture. But then *their* familiarity ought to be no precedent for us who worship him in his Glory, and converse with him in the sacrament, as he is spiritually present, and who therefore should be very irreverent to approach him in any other posture than that of adoration.

"It is worth observing, that they who at other times cry out so much against the Church of England for retaining several ceremonies, which, though indifferent in themselves, they say, become unlawful by being abused by superstition and popery, can, in this more solemn and material ceremony, agree even with the Pope himself (who receives sitting), rather than not differ from the best and purest Church in the world.

"Nor may I pass by unobserved, that the posture of *sitting* was first brought into the Church by the *Arians*; who stubbornly denying the Divinity of our Saviour, thought it no robbery to be equal with him, and to sit with him at his table; for which reason it was justly banished the Reformed Church in Poland by a general Synod, A. D. 1583. And it is the Pope's opinion of his being St. Peter's successor, and Christ's viceregent, which prompts him to use such familiarity with his Lord."*

* Mr. Wheatly—Order for the Administration of the Lord's Supper. Sect. 25.

“Our kneeling at Communions is the gesture of piety. If we did there present ourselves, but to make some show, or dumb resemblance of a spiritual feast, it may be that sitting were the fitter ceremony: but coming as receivers of inestimable grace at the hands of God, what doth better become our bodies at that hour, than to be sensible witnesses of minds unfeignedly humbled? Our Lord himself did that which custom and long usage had made fit; we that which fitness and great decency hath made usual.”*

It was one of the articles agreed on by the ten Bishops and twenty Divines, who were empowered by a Commission under the Great Seal in 1689, to effect a Comprehension, that such as declared they could not overcome their scruples, with respect to kneeling at the Communion, should be admitted to it in another posture. But the whole came to nothing by the intemperate zeal of the Lower House of Convocation.

Against the Office for the Ministration of Baptism, three objections have been made;—First, Against the Rubrick that requires the suretiship of Godfathers and Godmothers. Second, Against the use of the Cross in Baptism. Third, Against those expressions of the Liturgy which seem to identify regeneration and baptism.

First—Against the Rubrick that requires the suretiship of Godfathers and Godmothers. “Are not parents,” say the objectors, “the only proper persons to take upon them vows for the religious education of their own children? Is not the acceptance of other sureties, whom the parents themselves very probably would not even

* Hooker's Ecclesiastical Polity. Book v, 68.

suffer to interfere in the education of their children, an ordinance calculated to remove, apparently at least, that responsibility which rests on those to whom the God of Providence as well as of Grace has appointed it, and to lay it upon those who, though they undertake it in form, are never likely to think seriously of the matter?" To these objections the friends of the Liturgy reply, that "Since the laws of all nations (because infants cannot speak for themselves) have allowed them *Guardians* to contract for them in *secular* matters, which contracts, if they be fair and beneficial, the *infants* must make good when they come to age; it cannot, one would think, be unreasonable for the Church to allow them *Spiritual Guardians*, to promise those things in their name, without which they cannot obtain salvation. And this too, at the same time, gives security to the Church, that the children shall not apostatize, from whence they are called *Sureties*; provides *Monitors* to every Christian, to remind them of the vow which they made in their presence, from whence they are called *Witnesses*; and better represents the New Birth by giving the Infants new and spiritual relation, whence they are termed *Godfathers* and *Godmothers*.

"How long the Church has fixed the number of these sureties, I cannot tell; but by a Constitution of *Edmond*, Archbishop of *Canterbury*, A.D. 1236, and in a Synod held at Worcester, A.D. 1240, I find the same provision made as is now required by our rubrick, viz. That there shall be for every male child that is to be baptized, two Godfathers and one Godmother; and for every female, one Godfather and two Godmothers.

"By the twenty ninth canon of our Church, *no parent is to be admitted to answer as godfather for his own child.*

For the parents are already engaged under such strict bonds, both by nature and religion, to take care of their children's education, that the Church does not think that she can lay them under greater: but still makes provision, that if, notwithstanding these obligations, the parents should be negligent, or if it should please God to take them to himself before the children be grown up; there yet may be others upon whom it shall lie to see that the children do not want due instructions, by means of such carelessness, or death of their parents. And for a further prevention of people's entering upon this charge, before they are capable of understanding the trust they take upon themselves, it is further provided by the above-mentioned canon, that *no person be admitted godfather, or godmother, before the said person so undertaking hath received the holy communion.*"*

The second objection is to the sign of the Cross in Baptism. The objectors observe that the form of Baptism, as well as the ordinance itself, being of Divine institution, and no mention being made in that form of the sign of the cross, this addition is inconsistent with the simplicity and purity of that sacred commandment; that if our blessed Saviour had considered the sign of the cross necessary, he would have enjoined it. They add that the superinducing of such a form by human authority is the assumption of a power equal, and of wisdom superior to the Head of the Church; and finally, that the oil, salt, and spittle, used in the Church of Rome, are just as innocent ceremonies, and stand upon the same ground, —the interposition of human authority in adding to Divine

* Mr. Wheatly, of the Ministration of Public Baptism, Sec. 1.

institutions. To these objections it is replied, "the most solemn vow that we ever made to obey Christ, and to suffer willingly all reproaches for his sake, was made in baptism: And amongst other memorials to keep us mindful of that vow, we cannot think that the sign which our new baptized foreheads did there receive is either unfit or unforcible; the reasons hitherto alleged, being weighed with indifferent balance. It is not (you will say) the cross on our foreheads, but in our hearts the faith of Christ, that armeth us with patience, constancy, and courage. Which as we grant to be most true, so neither dare we despise, no not the meanest helps that serve, though it be but in the very lowest degree of furtherance, toward the highest services that God doth require at our hands. And if any man deny that such ceremonies are available, at the least as memorials of duty; or do think that himself hath no need to be so put in mind, what our duties are; it is but reasonable, that in the one the public experience of the world overweigh some few men's persuasion; and in the other, the rare perfection of a few condescend unto common imbecility, being therefore, that to fear shame, which doth worthily follow sin, and to bear undeserved reproach constantly is the general duty of all men professing Christianity; seeing also that our weakness, while we are in this world, doth need towards spiritual duties, the help even of corporal furtherance; and that by reason of natural intercourse between the highest and the lowest powers of man's mind in all actions, his fancy or imagination, carrying in it that special note of remembrance, than which, there is nothing more forcible, where either too weak or too strong a conceit of infamy and disgrace might do great harm, standeth always ready to put forth a kind of necessary helping

hand; we are in that respect to acknowledge the good and profitable use of this ceremony; and not to think it superfluous, that Christ hath his mark applied unto that part where bashfulness appeareth, in token that they which are Christians should be at no time ashamed of his ignominy.*

“The cross of Christ is the doctrine, to which all the other doctrines of the Gospel refer, and from which they derive all the efficacy and influence they have, towards purging our consciences from dead works; and therefore in that single article they are often all of them summed up and comprized. ‘We preach Christ crucified,’ says St. Paul (1 Cor. i. 23); as if that, and that alone, were the subject of all he wrote, and all he spoke: And again, ‘I determined to know nothing but Christ, and him crucified’ (1 Cor. ii. 2); as if that were the great point of saving knowledge, to which those who learn, or those who teach the Religion of Christ, should altogether apply themselves.—Very fitly, therefore, has the Church of England appointed that, after we have been ‘received into the congregation of Christ’s flock by baptism, we should be signed with the sign of the cross, in token (as she speaks) that we should not hereafter be ashamed to confess the faith of Christ crucified, but should manfully fight under his banner against sin, the world, and the devil, and continue Christ’s faithful soldiers and servants to our lives ends.’ A ceremony, whatever fault may have been found with it, which is certainly very ancient, very innocent, and very significant too; as it fitly

* Hooker’s Ecclesiastical Polity, Book v. 65.

admonishes us, throughout the whole course of the Christian warfare, to look upon the Cross of Christ, as the proper badge of our profession, which we ought not to be ashamed, or afraid to own; whenever he, in whose service we are listed, shall call upon us to take it up, and follow him.*

“For the better understanding of which primitive ceremony (the sign of the cross in baptism), we may observe, that it was an ancient rite, for masters and generals to mark the fore-heads or hands of their servants and soldiers, with their names or marks, that it might be known to whom they did belong: and to this custom the Angel in the Revelation is thought to allude (c. vii. 3), ‘*Hurt not the earth, &c. till we have sealed the servants of our God in their fore-heads.*’ Thus again (c. xiv.) the retinue of the Lamb are said to have ‘his Father’s name written in their fore-heads.’ And thus, lastly, in the same chapter, as Christ’s flock carried his mark on their fore-heads, so did his great adversary, the Beast, sign his servants there also.—(v. 9.) ‘If any man shall receive the mark of the beast in his fore-head or in his hand,’ &c. Now that the Christian Church may have some analogy with those sacred applications, she conceived it a most significant ceremony in Baptism (which is our first admission into the Christian profession), that all her children should be signed with the cross on their fore-heads, signifying thereby their consignment, up to Christ, whence it is often called by the Ancient Fathers the *Lord’s Signet* and *Christ’s Seal*.

“In a word, the cross in baptism till late years had been so inoffensive to the most scrupulous minds, that even

* Bishop Atterbury’s Sermon, on Glorifying on the Cross of Christ.

Bacer could find nothing indecent in it, if it was used and applied with a pious mind. He only disapproved of directing the form that was used at the imposing of it, to the child itself, who could not understand it. For which reason he wished it might be turned into a prayer. The Reviewers of our Liturgy did not indeed exactly comply with him, but however they have ordered the form to be spoken to the congregation; and further to remove all manner of scruple, have deferred the signing with it till after the child is baptized; that so none may charge us with making the ceremony essential to baptism, which is now finished before the cross is made, and which is esteemed, in cases of extremity, not at all deficient, where it is celebrated without it.*

The Third objection to the Ministration of Baptism used in the Church of England is, against those expressions which seem to identify regeneration with baptism. In the office for the public baptism of infants, after the baptism of the child and his reception into the congregation of Christ's flock, and being signed with the sign of the cross, the Priest is directed to say, "Seeing now, dearly beloved brethren, that *this child* is regenerate, and grafted into the body of Christ's Church, let us give thanks to Almighty God for these benefits; and with one accord make our prayers unto him, that *this child* may lead the rest of his life according to this beginning." Immediately after follows the Lord's Prayer, and then this thanksgiving and prayer, "We yield thee hearty thanks, most merciful Father, that it hath pleased thee to regenerate *this Infant* with the Holy Spirit, to receive *him* for

* Mr. Wheatly, of the Ministration of Public Baptism. Sect. 3d.

thine own *child* by adoption; and to incorporate him into thy holy Church," &c. It is however far from being the opinion of the general body of the Church of England that regeneration and baptism are inseparable. They generally consider Baptism as a Divine institution, emblematical of Regenerating grace, as the Lord's Supper is of our Pardon and Peace through the Atonement of Christ, or his body broken and his blood shed for us; and though they admit that the external reception of both these sacraments may be, and they hope is often, attended with the blessings they represent, yet they do not consider them as uniformly operating as cause and effect, but rank them among the means of grace, which God has commanded us to use for obtaining salvation. The question therefore is, How can a Minister of Christianity, who does not believe that baptism is always attended with regeneration, use that part of the office which seems to proceed upon the supposition that they are concomitant? It is remarkable that neither Mr. Hooker, nor Mr. Wheatly, have either stated, or met this difficulty. Mr. Simeon, so far as we recollect, is the only commentator on the Liturgy who has stated, and given it an answer. In his Sermons on the Liturgy preached before the University of Cambridge in November, 1811, and in his defence of them, published in the Christian Observer for November, 1812, against the remarks of an anonymous correspondent in that publication, for the month of August in the same year, Mr. Simeon vindicates the language of the Liturgy by the use ~~which~~ Scripture makes of expressions of a similar kind. He contends that the Apostles in their writings, frequently employ modes of speech which will not admit of being carried to the utmost extent that the words would bear, and argues that ~~the expressions in the Liturgy,~~

to which we have referred, are entitled to the same candid interpretation, as they are accommodated to the popular style of the Scriptures on the same subject. To prove that the Apostles use language of this kind, he quotes the words of St. Paul. "By one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit."—1 Cor. xii. 13. This the Apostle says of all the visible members of Christ's body. Again, speaking of the whole nation of Israel, infants as well as adults, he says they were "all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; and did all eat the same spiritual meat; and did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual rock that followed them; and that rock was Christ."—1 Cor. x. 2, 3, 4. Yet behold in the very next verse he tells them, "But with many of them God was not well pleased; for they were overthrown in the wilderness." He applies the same mode of reasoning to these words of the same Apostle—"As many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ" (Gal. iii. 27.), and enforces his illustration from the declaration of St. Peter with respect to the state of the apostate from Christianity, "he hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins" (2 Peter, i. 9); a mode of speaking which Mr. Simeon thinks perfectly similar to the expression in the Liturgy to which the exception is made. "Though," says Mr. Simeon, "I am no Arminian, I do think that the refinements of Calvin have done great harm in the Church. They have drawn multitudes from the plain and popular way of speaking, used by the inspired writers, and have made them unreasonably and unscripturally squeamish in their modes of expression; and I conceive that the less addicted any person is to systematic accuracy, the more

he will accord with the inspired writers, and the more he will approve of the views of our Reformers. I do not mean however to say, that a slight alteration in two or three instances would not be an improvement, since it would take off a burthen from many minds, and supersede the necessity of laboured explanations: but I do mean to say, that there is no such objection to these expressions as to deter any conscientious person from giving his unfeigned assent and consent to the Liturgy altogether, or from using the particular expressions which we have been endeavouring to explain."*

A strong objection has often been made to the indiscriminate use of the Burial Service. "The expression in the Burial Service," says an anonymous writer, in his remarks on Mr. Simeon's Sermons on the Liturgy, (Chris. Ob. for Sept. 1812,) "of our 'sure and certain hope of the Resurrection to eternal life,' which he (Mr. S.) admits, according to the spirit of the words, to imply our sure and certain hope that the soul of the person about to be committed to the grave, will rise to eternal life, and the direct assertion of our hope that he rests in Christ, and our thanksgiving to God, for having taken his soul to himself—are a stumbling block to many members of the Church, and have a tendency to produce this error, than which, few can be more pernicious,—that whatever a man's life may have been, yet if he die in communion with the Church his case is hopeful." Let us hear Mr. Simeon's defence. "In our burial service we thank God for delivering our brother out of the miseries of this sinful world, and express a sure and certain hope of the Resurrection

* Sermons on the Liturgy, p. p. 51, 52, which Weck the Reader may consult.

to eternal life, together with a hope also that our departed brother rests in Christ. Of course it often happens that we are called to use these expressions over persons who, there is reason to fear, have died in their sins, and the question is, How we can with propriety use them? I answer, that even according to the letter of the words, the use of them may be justified, because we speak not of his, but of the resurrection to eternal life; and because, while we do not absolutely know that God has not pardoned a person, we may entertain some measure of hope that he has. But taking the expressions more according to the spirit of them, they precisely accord with what we continually read in the Epistles of St. Paul. In the first Epistle to the Corinthian Church, he says of them, 'I thank my God always on your behalf, that in every thing ye are enriched by him in all utterance, and in all knowledge; even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you: so that ye come behind in no gift, waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.' Yet does he instantly begin to condemn the same persons for their divisions and contentions, and afterwards tells them 'that they were carnal, and walked not as saints, but as men;' that is, as unconverted and ungodly men."*

"Against the last of these prayers," says Mr. Wheatly, "it is often objected, we make declaration of *Hope* that all we bury are saved. In order to appease the scruples about which, as far as the nature of the expression will bear; we desire it may be considered, that there are very different degrees of *hope*, the lowest of which is but one remove from *despair*. Now, there are but very few

* Sermons on the Liturgy, p. 46.

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with whom we are concerned, that ~~the~~ ^{his} is a state so utterly desperate, as that we may positively affirm they are damned; which yet we might do, did we absolutely and entirely despair of their salvation; and this seems sufficient to warrant this declaration, especially if it be pronounced as faintly as the hope itself is entertained. However, it must be confessed, that it is very plain, from the whole tenor of this office, that the compilers of it, presuming upon a due exercise of discipline, never supposed that any would be offered to Christian Burial, who had not led Christian lives. But since iniquity hath so far prevailed over the discipline of the Church, that Schismatics, Heretics, and all manner of vicious lives, escape its censures; this gloss seems the best that our present circumstances will admit of. And if it be not satisfactory, there seems to be no other remedy left, than that our governors should leave us to a discretionary use of these expressions, either till they be altered by public authority; or, which is much rather to be wished, till discipline be so vigorously exercised, that there be no offence in the use of them."*

* Mr. Wheatly, of the Order for the Burial of the Dead, Chap. xii, Sect 1.

rites and usages of the united church of england and ireland.

WE come to those Rites and Usages by which the United Churches is distinguished from the Church of Scotland, and from the Churches of the Dissenters in England. One of the most striking distinctions is the Ceremony of Consecration, or the setting apart in a solemn manner, those edifices which are erected for the public ordinances of religion. In the Church of Scotland when edifices of this kind are finished, they are immediately taken possession of, and the ordinary offices of religion performed, without any formal dedication, or any other ceremony than that to which, every Lord's day, the Congregation are accustomed. The celebration of the mysteries of religion in general, is the only office of sanctity by which their Churches are recognized as more sacred than buildings that are reared for the ordinary habitations of men. The Meeting-houses of Dissenters in England, with this difference that they are built without steeples, are in the same manner, when finished, applied to the purposes of religion without any adventitious solemnity. Some of the Dissenters have said that the holiness of stone and timber is a mystery by much too sublime for their understandings to comprehend. When a Church or Chapel, on the establishment of the United Kingdom, is finished, before any other office of religion is performed in it, it is, by the solemn consecration of a Bishop, after

a prescribed form, dedicated to God and appropriated to his service. "We know no reason wherefore Churches should be the worse, if at the first erecting of them, at the making of them public, at the time when they are delivered, as it were, into God's own possession, and when the use whereunto they shall ever serve is established, ceremonies fit to betoken such intents, and to accompany such actions be usual, as in the purest times they have been. When Constantine had finished an House for the service of God at *Jerusalem*, the Dedication he judged a matter not unworthy, about the solemn performance whereof, the greatest part of the Bishops in Christendom should meet together. Which thing they did at the Emperor's motion, each most willingly setting forth that action to their power, some with orations, some with sermons, some with the sacrifice of prayers unto God for the peace of the world, for the Church's safety, for the Emperor's and his children's good. By *Athanasius* the like is recorded concerning a Bishop of *Alexandria*, in a work of the like devout magnificence. So that whether Emperors or Bishops in these days were Church-founders, the solemn Dedication of Churches they thought not to be a work in itself either vain or superstitious. Can we judge it a thing seemly, for any man to go about the building of a House to the God of Heaven, with no other appearance, than if his end were to rear up a kitchen, or parlour, for his own use? Or when a work of such nature is finished, remaineth there nothing but presently to use it, and so an end? It becometh that the place where God shall be served by the whole Church, be a public place, for the avoiding of privy conventicles, which, covered with pretence of religion, may serve unto dangerous practices.—Finally, it (the Conse-

eration of Churches) notifieth, in a solemn manner, the holy and religious use whereunto it is intended such Houses should be put. These things the wisdom of Solomon did not account superfluous. He knew how easily that which was meant should be holy and sacred, might be drawn from the use whereunto it was first provided. He knew how bold men are to take even from God himself, and how hardly that house would be kept from impious profanation; he knew, and right wisely therefore endeavoured, by such solemnities to leave in the minds that impression, which might somewhat restrain their boldness, and nourish a reverend affection towards the House of God. For which cause when the first House was destroyed, and a new one in the stead thereof erected, by the Children of Israel, after their return from captivity, they kept the Dedication of this House also with joy.

“The arguments which our Saviour useth against profaners of the Temple, he taketh from the use whereunto it was with solemnity consecrated. And as the Prophet Jeremy forbiddeth the carrying of burdens on the sabbath, because that was a sanctified day: So because the Temple was a place sanctified, our Lord would not suffer, no not the carriage of a vessel through the Temple. These two commandments therefore are in the Law conjoined, *We shall keep my sabbaths, and reverence my sanctuary.* Out of those the Apostle's words, *Have ye not Houses to eat and drink in?* albeit Temples, such as now, were not then erected for the exercise of the Christian Religion, it hath been nevertheless not absurdly conceived, that he reacheth what difference should be made between house and house; that what is fit for the Dwelling place of God, and what for man's habitation, he sheweth; requireth that Christian men at their own homes

take common food, and in the House of the Lord, none but that food which is heavenly; he instructeth them, that as in the one place they use to refresh their bodies, so they may in the other learn to seek the nourishment of their souls; and as there they sustain temporal life, so here they would learn to make provision for Eternal. Christ could not suffer that the Temple should serve for a place of mart, nor the Apostle of Christ, that the Church should be made an inn. When therefore we sanctify or hallow Churches, that which we do is only to testify that we make them places of public resort, that we invest God himself with them, and that we sever them from common uses."*

"When Churches are built, they ought to have a greater value and esteem derived upon them by some peculiar *Consecration*: For it is not enough barely to devote them to the public services of religion, unless they are also set apart with the solemn rites of a formal *Dedication*. For, by these solemnities, the Founders surrender all the right they have in them to God, and make God himself the sole owner of them. And formerly, whoever gave any lands or endowments to the service of God, gave it in a formal writing, sealed and witnessed, (as is now usual between man and man) the tender of the gift being made upon the altar by the donor on his knees. The antiquity of such dedications is evident from its being an universal custom amongst *Jews* and *Gentiles*: and it is observable that, amongst the former, at the consecration of both the Tabernacle and Temple, it pleased the Almighty to give a manifest sign that he then took posses-

* Hooker's Ecclesiastical Polity, Book v, Sect. 12.

sion of them. When it was first taken up by *Christians* is not easy to determine: though there are no footsteps of any such thing to be met with, in any approved writer, till the reign of *Constantine*; in whose time, Christianity being become more prosperous and flourishing, Churches were every where erected and repaired; and no sooner were so, but, as *Eusebius* tells us, they were solemnly consecrated, and the Dedications celebrated with great festivity and rejoicing. The rites and ceremonies used upon these occasions (as we find in the same author) were a great confluence of Bishops, and strangers from all parts, the performance of divine Offices, singing of Hymns and Psalms, reading and expounding the Scriptures, Sermons and Orations, receiving the Holy Sacrament, Prayers and Thanksgivings, liberal Alms bestowed upon the poor, and great gifts even to the Church; and, in short, mighty expressions of mutual love and kindness, and universal rejoicing with one another.”*

THE RITE OF CONFIRMATION.

Though Calvin admitted this Rite to be of Apostolical authority, its obligation is denied by the Church of Scotland, and by almost all the English Dissenters, and it is practised by none of them. They do not dispute that it was the practice of the Apostles, by the imposition of hands, to confer on those who had been baptized, miraculous gifts, and these powers they say, were demonstrated to have been communicated by the astonishing effects they produced. “Simon saw, that through laying on of

* Mr. Wheatly, Chap. II, Sect. 2d.

the Apostles' hands, the Holy Ghost was given."—Acts, viii. 18. Sanctifying grace, they observe, is not the subject of bodily vision, nor was it an object, which so wicked a man as Simon would desire to possess, much less would he have parted with his money to purchase it. As the intention of this rite was to communicate miraculous gifts, which were peculiar to the first ages of Christianity, all of which are allowed to be no longer blessings that can be communicated, they argue, that the obligation of the rite has ceased, with the powers which it had been in use to communicate. They also argue that the vows which are taken for infants, on the sacrament of Baptism, the infants when come to the years of discernment, are bound to ratify in the other sacrament of the New Testament, by the participation of which they professedly seal their baptismal engagements, personally devoting themselves to the Saviour. And further, they argue that every young person, who is capable with judgment, and pious dispositions of taking his baptismal vows upon himself, is equally capable of doing it in that commemorative ordinance, in which the dying love of his Saviour, the most powerful and constraining obligation to obedience, is celebrated.

The advocates for the Liturgy observe, "That the Apostles, having received the Spirit, immediately knew to what use it was given them; viz. not to be confined to their own persons or College; but to be imparted by them to the whole Church of God. For the Spirit itself *was to teach them all things, and to bring all things to their remembrance*. And therefore, to be sure, it taught and reminded them, that the gifts and graces which they received by it, were equally necessary to all Christians whatever. Accordingly, as soon as they heard that the *Samaritans* had been converted and baptized by Philip, they

sent two of their number, Peter and John, to *lay their hands on them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost*: a plain argument, that neither Baptism alone, nor the person that administered it, was able to convey the Holy Ghost: since if either the Holy Ghost were a consequence of Baptism, or if Philip had power to communicate the Divine Spirit by any other ministration, the Apostles would not have come from *Jerusalem* on purpose to have confirmed them. The same may be argued from a like occurrence to the Disciples at *Ephesus*: upon whom, *after they had been baptized* in the name of the *Lord Jesus*, the Apostle Paul laid his hands, and *then the Holy Ghost came on them*: Which shows, that the receiving of the Holy Ghost was not the consequence of their being baptized, but of the Apostle's laying on his hands: and that *laying on of hands* was necessary to perfect and complete the *Ephesians*, even after they had received the sacrament of Baptism.

“What has been esteemed the clearest evidence, that the Rite of Confirmation was a *perpetual* Institution of equal use and service in all ages of the Church, is, that passage of St. Paul in his epistle to the Hebrews, where he mentions the Doctrine of *laying on of hands*, as well as the Doctrine of Baptism, among the fundamentals of religion. Which words have been constantly interpreted by writers of all ages, of that Imposition, or laying on of hands, which was used by the Apostles in confirming the Baptized. Inasmuch that this single text of St. Paul is, even in Calvin's opinion, abundantly sufficient to prove Confirmation to be of *Apostolical* Institution. And indeed from these very words of the Apostle, it not only appears to be a lasting Ministry (because no part of the Christian Doctrine can be changed or abolished); but hence also

we may infer it to be of Divine Institution : since if it were not, St. Paul would seem guilty of *teaching for doctrines the commandments of men* : which not being to be supposed, it must follow that this doctrine of Imposition of Hands is Holy and Divine.

“ It is true, the Ministration of this Rite at first was frequently attended with *miraculous powers*. But so also we read were Prayer and Preaching, which yet no one ever thought to be only *temporary* ordinances. To fancy therefore that the Invocation of the Holy Spirit, with Imposition of Hands, was to cease, when the extraordinary effects of it failed, is too groundless a supposition to be put in the balance against the weight of so sacred and positive an Institution. In the infancy of the Church these visible effects upon those that believed, were necessary to bring over others to the Faith : but when whole nations turned Christians, this occasion ceased ; and therefore the Holy Ghost does not now continue to empower us to work them. But still, the ordinary Gifts and Graces, which are useful and necessary to complete a Christian, are nevertheless the fruits and effects of this holy Rite. And these are by much the more valuable benefits. To cast out the devil of lust, or to throw down the pride of Lucifer ; to beat down Satan under our feet ; or to triumph over our spiritual enemies ; to cure a diseased soul, or to keep unharmed from the assaults of a temptation, or the infection of an ill example, is much more advantageous and beneficial to us, than the power of working the greatest miracles.

“ It is true, by the ministry of the holy Eucharist, the Spirit of ghostly strength is conveyed ; and therefore in the times of primitive devotion, this blessed Sacrament was daily administered, that those who would be safe

against their spiritual enemies, might from hence be armed with fresh supplies of the Divine assistance. But still we must remember, that the principal design of the holy Eucharist, is to renew the work of preceding Rites, to repair the breaches that the enemy has made, and to supply fresh forces where the old ones fail. For this reason the Sacrament of the Eucharist is to be often repeated, whereas Baptism and Confirmation are but once administered. But now this shows that Confirmation (in the regular and ordinary administration of it) is as much required to go before the Eucharist, as Baptism is to precede either that or Confirmation. Upon which account, our Church admits none to the Communion before Confirmation, unless necessity requires it. And indeed it may as well be imagined, that because the Eucharist conveys remission of sins, it may therefore supply the want of Baptism; as that because it conveys ghostly strength, therefore there is no need of Confirmation after it. Or again, the Eucharist itself may as well be omitted, because Prayer has the promise of whatever is asked; as Confirmation be rendered useless or unnecessary, because the Eucharist will supply us with Grace. The Spirit of God comes which way he pleases; but yet if we expect his grace or blessing, we must ask for, and seek it, by those ways and means which he himself has thought fit to appoint.

“ But lastly, as Baptism is now for the most part administered to *Infants*, this holy Rite is afterwards necessary to confirm to them the benefits of that holy Sacrament. For though the charity of the Church accepts of sureties in behalf of infants, which are not in a condition to contract for themselves; yet when they arrive at years of discretion, she expects them to take the covenant upon

themselves, as their own act and deed: which is one of the considerations for which the Church declares Confirmation to be *very convenient* to be observed, viz. *to the end, that children being now come to the years of discretion, and having learned what their Godfathers and Godmothers promised for them in Baptism, they may therefore with their own mouth and consent, openly before the Church, ratify and confirm the same, and also promise that, by the grace of God, they will evermore endeavour themselves faithfully to observe such things, as they by their own confession have assented unto.* And indeed they who refuse, in their own persons, to ratify the vow which was made in their name, renounce in effect all the benefits and advantages to which the contract of their sureties had before entitled them."*

In the Church of England, the Lord's Supper is administered on Christmas day, and on some other festivals; it is also administered to the Sick, and to penitent Malefactors; but in the Church of Scotland, and among the English Dissenters, it is never administered but on the Lord's day, and in the assembly of the Church. Though it is certain that Calvin approved of its being given to the Sick, and penitent Malefactors, they who have adopted his sentiments in most other things, are, on this subject, at variance with him.

* Whately, Chap. II, Order of Confirmation.

DOCTRINES OF THE UNITED CHURCH.

THE Doctrines of the Church are contained in her Thirty-Nine Articles, to which every one of her Ministers is obliged to subscribe. The first eight Articles have been interpreted by Churchmen in general, with few shades of difference. The Ninth has been the subject of various, and even of opposite interpretations. It is as follows. Of Original, or Birth-Sin.

“Original Sin standeth, not in the following of Adam, (as the Pelagians do vainly talk) but it is the fault and corruption of the nature of every man, that naturally is engendered of the offspring of Adam, whereby man is *very far gone* from Original Righteousness, and is, of his own nature, inclined to Evil, so that the Flesh lusteth always contrary to the Spirit; and therefore in every person born into this world, it deserveth God’s Wrath and Damnation. And this infection of Nature doth remain, yea, in them that are regenerated; whereby the lust of the Flesh, called in the Greek *σάρκα καὶ αἷμα*, which some expound the wisdom, some the sensuality, some the affection, some the desire of the flesh, is not subject to the Law of God. And although there is no condemnation to them that believe and are baptized, yet the Apostle doth confess, that concupiscence and lust hath of itself the nature of sin.”

There are two things affirmed in the Article—First, The total corruption and depravity of our nature, in con-

sequence of the fall. Man is said to be *very far* gone from Original Righteousness. In the Latin the expression is much stronger. It is *quam longissime ab originali Justitia*, as far gone as possible from Original Righteousness. Man is said to be of his own nature inclined to evil, so that the flesh lusteth always contrary to the Spirit. Lest any person should suppose, that by Regeneration that propensity is wholly removed, it is added, "this infection of nature doth remain in them that are regenerated, whereby the lust of the flesh is not subject to the Law of God."—Second, The demerit of our corrupted nature. "In every person born into the world it deserveth God's wrath and damnation." This passage in the Article some Divines in the Church have endeavoured to soften into temporal afflictions and death; and thus to exclude everlasting misery from that wrath and damnation; which the corruption of our nature is said to deserve. But if it be true, as the Scripture affirms it to be, that we were enemies to God when he gave his Son to die for us; if the carnal mind is enmity to God, and cannot be subject to his Law; if they that are in the flesh *cannot* please God; if the wages of sin is death, in that sense in which death is generally taken in the New Testament: if the stains of Original sin are of so scarlet and crimson a kind, that the blood of God's Son alone can wash them out; and if even infants need a Saviour, and are commanded by the Redeemer to be brought unto him; we have all the evidence that the nature of the case admits, that by our Original sin we are liable to punishment in the eternal world. A corrupted and vicious nature, which stands opposed to the holiness; and to the law of God, cannot be the object of his love. Now, as Bishop Burnet observes, "since there is no mean in God between

love and wrath, between acception and condemnation, if such persons are not in the first order, they must be in the second.—If infants stand in no need of forgiveness, and of the mercy of God in the New Covenant, what have they to do with baptism in the name of Christ, which is one of its seals? St. Paul, in the strongest terms, affirms, that by the offence of one many were dead; that the judgment was by one to condemnation; and that by *one man's* disobedience many were made sinners." "As these words," says the same author, "are positive and of great importance in themselves, so all this is much the stronger by the opposition in which every one of them is put to the effects and benefits of Christ's death; particularly to our Justification through him, in which there is an imputation of the merits and effects of his death, that are thereby transferred to us; so that the whole effect of this discourse is taken away, if the imputation of Adam's sin is denied. And this explication does certainly quadrate more entirely to the words of the Article, as it is known that this was the tenet of those who prepared the Articles; it having been the generally received opinion from St. Austin downwards."

Bishop Burnet in his exposition of this Article, has given up the objections of some, whom he calls great Divines, in the Church, to the interpretation of God's wrath and damnation, as extending to the miseries of eternity, and their arguments for confining them wholly to temporal death, and the afflictions that prepare the way for it. They do not deny that those who drew up the Articles were of sentiments decidedly at variance with theirs. But they argue that they are only bound to sign the Articles in a literal and grammatical sense, and that temporal evils are sometimes, in Scriptural language, called God's

wrath and damnation. It were much to be wished that these Divines had expressed their objections in language more guarded than that which they have used. The Bishop makes them represent God's condemnation of all mankind to misery in the eternal world, as carrying in it an *idea of cruelty beyond what the blackest tyrants ever invented*. The very objectors to the doctrine allow, that by the fall of man the whole human race have suffered, and will to the end of the world continue to suffer, agonies innumerable; that they are tortured in life, and swallowed up in death. As these evils are universal, they far exceed those which all the tyrants of the world have been able to inflict. How then can they reconcile, upon their own principles, those inflictions of Divine Providence with the Justice of God. If the whole race of mankind have suffered so much, for nearly six thousand years, that in the language of Scripture, the whole creation *groaneth and travaileth in pain*, even till now; if these sorrows have fallen indiscriminately on the sons of men, with so heavy a weight that even the irreligious have been forced to complain, "that man was made to mourn," how will these men prove, that it would be unjust to visit a corrupted nature with punishments in the other world, which we see and feel it to suffer in this? If the corruption and depravity of our nature did not deserve punishment, it would not be punished. But if it deserves punishment, it must deserve it in all worlds as well as in this one. The justice of God can no more punish an innocent rational being for a day, than for an eternity.—All men when they come into the world, find themselves doomed to suffer, by a constitution antecedent to their being born into it; and doomed to suffer, because they bring into it a nature corrupted and depraved; now, what cri-

dence can these men produce to prove, that it is not the law of *all worlds*, that vitiated and contaminated natures *must* suffer, while they continue to be so? The difficulty, therefore, is the same, admitting the facts, which are indisputable, upon their own principles, and whenever they shall vindicate the ways of God to man, in the present world, the same arguments will vindicate the justice of God's allotments, in connecting sin with its demerits in the world of eternity. If it be said that Original sin is only the fault of a nature unhappily descended, and what no man can help in himself, it is answered, that if this argument has any force, it concludes equally against the justice of temporal, as against the justice of eternal punishment. Would any man reckon it a sufficient evidence of justice, that without any crime he had suffered the tortures of a day, and not those of a year?

The objectors seem to proceed upon two mistakes. The first is, they seem to suppose that those who contend that Original sin deserves God's wrath and damnation in the other world, contend that it deserves all that punishment which actual guilt, by innumerable complicated crimes, and especially the rejection of the salvation of the Gospel, are justly condemned to suffer in the eternal world. If, in the other world there is so great a difference in the punishment of actual sinners, that some shall be beaten with *few*, and others with *many* stripes; if it will be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of Judgment, than for those who have neglected the Gospel, we may well believe, that the hell into which the wicked professors of Christianity shall fall, is a punishment vastly more severe, and justly more lasting, than the demerits of Original sin. To try the question by the description of that hell which is prepared for those who

have taken an active part in rebellion against God, or for those who to rebellion have added despite to the Grace of God, is therefore to try it by that which the Scriptures nowhere apply to it. They who believe the damnatory clause of the Article, as extending to another world, do not pretend to determine the extent of the punishment to which Original, or Birth-Sin exposes; and they believe, that were any of the human race to suffer its demerit, that Justice would inflict no more than what is just upon the whole.

The objectors seem to proceed upon another mistake; that it is a part of the system of those who believe Original sin to deserve God's wrath and damnation in the eternal world, that some, or many human beings chargeable with no other guilt, are punished, or will be punished, for it in the eternal world. But this is no doctrine of Christianity: nor is there a single text of Scripture that even seems to insinuate such a thing, and there are some which appear to afford scope for a contrary inference. If God spared Nineveh, for the sake of its infants, and if He gave his *well beloved Son* to be sin for us, though he knew no sin; if he made Him, the *Just*, suffer for us who are *unjust*, that he might bring us unto God; if our God is *Rich* in mercy, if with him there is *Plenteous* Redemption; if he has nowhere in his word excluded infants from his Kingdom, but even taught us that it consists of little children; if he has no pleasure in the death of sinners; if the blood of Jesus be a sacrifice of infinite value; if before the throne of God, there stand an innumerable company which no man can number, of all nations, kindreds, tongues, and languages, who have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb; the spirit of the Gospel seems to encourage our hope that,

so far as infants are concerned, as in Adam *all died* so in Christ *all shall be made alive*. The just demerit of Original sin, and the eternal state of those who have not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, are, therefore, questions which require to be discussed in a separate and distinct manner. Though by the law of the world in which we dwell, (and we have every reason from analogy to suppose by the laws of the universe,) corrupted natures are *necessarily* exposed to suffer; the Gospel having provided an Atonement, in the blood of Jesus, and effectual Divine energies, in the influences of the Holy Spirit, for the restoration of our diseased natures to the image of God, the unmerited Grace of God had opened to infants, as well as unto adults, a *new* and a *living* way into the holy sanctuary of our God. Even Calvinists, the illiberality of whose tenets it is now so much the fashion to censure, generally admit that the Gospel looks with a merciful eye upon little children, which induces them to think, with respect to those who die in infancy, that where sin hath abounded, Grace hath much more abounded, through Jesus Christ our Lord. "I think it, at least, highly probable," says that truly venerable man, Mr. Newton, "that when our Lord says, *Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of Heaven*, he does not only intimate the necessity of our becoming like little children in simplicity, as a qualification without which (as he expressly declares in other places) we cannot enter into his kingdom, but informs us of a fact, that the number of infants, who are effectually redeemed to God by his blood, so greatly exceeds the aggregate of adult believers, that comparatively speaking his kingdom may be said to consist of little children. The Apostle speaks of them as not having *sinned*

after the similitude of Adam's transgression, that is, with the consent of their understanding and will. And when he says, *We must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ*, he adds, *that every man may give an account of what he has done in the body, whether it be good or bad*. But children who die in their infancy have not done any thing in the body, either good or bad. It is true, they are by nature evil, and must, if saved, be the subjects of a supernatural change. And though we cannot conceive how this change is to be wrought, yet, I suppose, few are so rash as to imagine it impossible that any infants can be saved. The same power that produces this change in some, can produce it in all. And therefore I am willing to believe, till the Scripture forbids me, that infants, of all nations and kindreds, without exception, who die before they are capable of sinning after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who have done nothing in the body of which they can give an account, are included in the election of grace. They are born for a better world than this. They first enter this state of tribulation, they quickly pass through it, *their robes are washed white in the blood of the Lamb*, and they are admitted, for his sake, before the throne."*

It is remarkable, that that Poet, who, of all the ancients, is the most celebrated for judgment, has, in the noblest monument of Pagan antiquity, placed infants in a state of purgatorial punishment, in the other world :

" Continuo auditæ voces, vagitus et ingens,
Infantumque animæ fletus in limine primo:
Quos dulcis vitæ exsortes, et ab ubere raptos
Abstulit atra dies, et funere mersit acerbo."†

* Newton's *Messiah*, Vol. II, p. 415, 416. † Virgil's *Æneid*, Book VI.

It was a doctrine of the Platonic Philosophy, that purgatorial punishment was necessary in the other world, to wear out those stains and pollutions from the soul, which it had contracted in the body, in order to prepare it for the habitations of the blessed. The disciples of this school saw that infants suffered in this world, they therefore concluded, that it was in consequence of some hereditary depravity, and that, even in the other world, some degree of suffering was necessary to efface these stains, that they at last might be transmitted to the regions of bliss. On the subject of hereditary depravity and its demerits, their doctrine approached nearer to the truth, than the system of some Protestant Divines. Bishop Warburton, indeed, thought that the intention of the Poet, by placing Infants in a state of suffering in the other world was, to provide against the horrid practice of exposing Infants, which was almost universal in the Pagan world.* But, if this abominable custom proceeded, as it evidently did, from the want of natural affection, it does not appear that those who wanted bowels of compassion to feel for the miseries inflicted on their children in this world, by their own conduct, were likely to melt at the tale of their woes in the other.

The extent of Original sin and its deserts, are strongly represented in the Homily on Whitsunday, first part, and in that on the Nativity. It is one of the Articles which every Minister of the Church must subscribe, that both the Books of Homilies contain Godly and wholesome doctrine. How any Divine can, at one time, subscribe to that as Godly and wholesome doctrine, which, at another

* Divine Legation, Book II, Sect. 4th.

he represents as blasphemy, and possess common honesty, the author is utterly unable to comprehend. How a Minister, whose lips in the *Confession* have pronounced these words, *There is no health in us*, can even in consistency with common decency, assert in his sermon that mankind are naturally inclined to virtue, is a thing far beyond the reach of any ordinary understanding.

As for those who suppose that Adam was created mortal, and by consequence liable to affliction and disease, as, upon their principles, to suffer is one of the ends of our creation, the miseries of another world are evidently necessary to give rotundity and perfection to their system. If it be consistent with the goodness and mercy of God to create rational and innocent creatures, for the purpose of dying, eternal death and misery are the most glorious consummation that this doctrine can receive. As the Socinians and Pelagians make disease and mortality essential to the constitution of man, and of the world which was made for him, the only harvest, according to their principles, that men can expect to reap at the end of this world, is the first fruits of this existence in full perfection in eternity. The misery of man, it seems, was an original part of the Divine plan, and the plan which began with misery in this world, can only be completed in misery in the world to come. Yet those who make suffering and death the law of man's innocence, represent as unjust, that punishment which is the consequence of depravity and corruption !

ARTICLE X.—OF FREE-WILL.

The condition of Man, after the fall of Adam, is such, that he cannot turn and prepare himself, by his own na-

tural strength and good works, to faith, and calling upon God: Wherefore we have no power to do good works pleasant and acceptable to God, without the grace of God by Christ preventing us, that we may have a good will, and working with us, when we have that good will.

God originally created man with all those powers and faculties which were necessary to his obedience and to his happiness. By his rebellion, his understanding lost the capacity of discerning, in a just point of view, spiritual truths. His will became corrupted and depraved, and his passions and appetites became enslaved to sin. Even his natural powers have probably lost much of that vigorous tone they originally possessed, through the seeds of disease and death they have disseminated themselves through every organ, by which his knowledge is collected, and his ideas formed. But this is not the want of power which the Article mentions. The want of power to which it points, is not the natural weakness, but the corruption of his faculties. It is what the Scripture calls, being *dead in trespasses and sins*. It is that carnality of mind which the Scripture pronounces to be "*enmity* against God," and which *cannot* be subject to his law. A natural debility might, in the language of the world, be called our misfortune, but could not be considered as our crime. It would only be with respect to the mind in a general, what a palsied arm or limb is with respect to the body in a particular, sense—a want of vigour. It would be only such an universal affection of the mind as we sometimes see takes place in particular instances, when by the pressure of some particular calamity, its powers are broken; or when by the weight of years its faculties appear to be worn out, by its sympathy with the body, and sink with it into a state of feebleness and inaction. A condition of

mind to be deplored, but to which no criminality can be attached. But this want of power being a moral incapacity, is the disease of the heart, circulated through all the other faculties. The understanding retains its powers to distinguish and to determine, on every subject but the things of God; the will has a capacity of choosing and refusing, without the constraint of external force; but from its internal bias or corruption it chooses what it ought to refuse, and refuses what it ought to choose; and even when its selections are just, the motives by which it is influenced proceeding from self-love, as the supreme principle, are not only essentially defective, but in direct opposition to the supreme law of God, and those springs of action which ought to govern and invigorate its motions. The affections, those gales that waft the soul; and by filling its sails carry it to its desired port, are powerful to impel its motion toward sensual gratifications, but blow directly opposite to the love of God and the rest that is to be found in his favour and loving kindness. The imagination can rove with wing untired, and flight unbroken, in the vast and unbounded regions of conjecture and vanity. But when she is taught to soar on pinions strong and vigorous toward Heaven, she falls to the ground, baffled and feeble, her propensities cleaving to the dust. The memory, rich in trifles, has stores immense deposited and digested of things futile and fleeting; but of the promises of God, of the treasures of Divine Grace, of the things that are laid up for them that love God, its powers are treacherous. These, like the baseless fabric of a vision, pass through the gate of forgetfulness, and scarcely leave a wreck behind them.

The other part of the Article stands in opposition to the Pelagians who teach, (and the Socinians are of the same

sentiments) that the liberty of man is such that he wants no other grace than pardon; and that when the doctrines of religion are proposed to him, he possesses powers sufficient for every purpose of his own sanctification. The Semi-Pelagians admit the necessity of Divine Influences, to assist men in carrying their religious character to perfection. But they contend that in the conversion of men to God, the first step must be taken by our own will uninfluenced, and that, in consequence of this progress, our future labours are assisted by God's Holy Spirit. Against these positions, subversive of all Evangelical Religion, the Article asserts both a preventing, and an assisting grace. First, a preventing grace.—How deficient soever men were in the vigour of intellect, did that weakness proceed from no corruption of the will or heart, opportunities of instruction, and other things which are in the train of means, might disabuse it of its prejudices, and, by removing the obstruction, open every avenue to the approach of truth and goodness. The higher powers of the soul being thus recovered to the empire of religion, the faculties which dwell in the lower regions, and which form the link that joins our intellectual, to our sensitive faculties, our affections might soon participate of the healing virtue. By the renovating energies of a soul restored to health and soundness, they might be taught to rise from earth to heaven, and to assume that sublimated tone of feeling, which would at once dignify and purify them. The whole spirit, soul, and body, might thus by the resurrection of some latent energies, rise more glorious than from no fall. But the state of fallen man, as the Scripture describes it, admits not of any such hopes. The corruption of the will being the corruption of the heart, there is no principle of soundness whence regenerating influence can

proceed to re-invigorate the other powers. Enmity to God will never produce love to him; nor will rebellion reduce itself to obedience; nor will carnality ever lead to to spirituality of mind; nor death in trespasses and sins; ever awaken to righteousness. It is the universal law of the world in which we dwell, that a bad tree will never rectify itself; nor a poisonous serpent lay aside its venom; nor a tiger his ferocity; nor a man of a bad heart ever effect his own cure. From what we know of Angels, those sons of light who lost their innocence, of whom not one has been able to escape from the ruins of their fall; and from what we know of a Redeemer, and of the doctrine of Divine Influence provided for the recovery of man to the image of God, we are taught to infer, that it is a law of the universe that no rational being who revolts from the government of God, can ever find his way back to holiness or happiness, without a Mediator and a new creation to the image of God.

"None can come by faith to God the Son," says the venerable Bishop Beveridge, "but he that is drawn by the grace of God the Father. Though God doth not drive us to Christ, yet he draws us to him: He doth not drive us against our wills, but he draws us with our wills, making us *a willing people in the day of his power* (Psalm, cx. 3); and until we be thus made willing by the Father, we can never come unto the Son, for *no man can come unto me except the Father draw him*. And certainly this was St. Paul's opinion also, when he said, Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God.—2 Cor. 3, 5. If we be not sufficient of ourselves to think a good thought, how can we be able without God, to act with true faith? *Our sufficiency, saith he, is of God*; if we be able to do any

thing, it is he that makes us able; if we have any sufficiency, it is he that gives it. And therefore also it is that our Saviour saith, *He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit, for without me you can do nothing.*—John, xv. 5. He doth not say, there are some things you cannot do without me, or there are many things you cannot do without me, but, *without me you can do nothing*, nothing good, nothing pleasing and acceptable unto God: whereas if we could either prepare ourselves to turn, or turn ourselves when prepared, without him,—we should do much. And to put it out of doubt, the same Spirit tells us elsewhere, *For it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.*—Phil. ii. 13. It is he that first enables us to will what we ought to do, and then to do what we will. Both the grace we desire, and our desire of grace proceed from him. Without him we could not have any grace if we would, and without him we could not will to have any grace at all. So that I am not only bound to thank him for his bestowing grace upon me, but also for my desiring grace of him. For it is he that worketh in me, both to will and to do, both to will and desire, and also to act, and exercise grace: or, as it is expressed in this Article, it is he that *prevents us that we may have a good will*, and it is he that *worketh with us when we have that good will*. And therefore, certainly, without him we can neither prepare ourselves for conversion, nor convert ourselves after preparation, unless we can prepare ourselves without having a good will, or convert ourselves without acting of it. For it is he only that giveth this good will to us, and it is he that acteth this good will in us, without whom we could not desire

it, before we have it, nor act it when we have it." &c. The worthy Bishop shows, that, this was the doctrine of the Primitive Church, by quotations from St. Augustine, Maxentius, Fulgentius, the Second Council of Orange, and from the African Council.

The Homilies speak decidedly the same language, "Of ourselves we be crab-trees that can bring forth no apples. We be of ourselves of such earth as can but bring forth weeds, nettles, brambles, briars, cockle, and darnel. Our fruits be declared in the fifth chapter of Galatians (19, 21). We have neither faith, charity, hope, patience, nor any thing that is good in us; and therefore these virtues be called there the fruits of the Holy Ghost; not the fruits of man. Hitherto we have heard what we are of ourselves, very sinful, wretched, and damnable. Again, we have heard how that of ourselves, and by ourselves, we are not able either to think a good thought, or work a good deed: so that we can find in ourselves no hope of salvation; but rather whatsoever maketh for our destruction."—Homily on the Misery of Man, second part.

ARTICLE XI.—OF THE JUSTIFICATION OF MAN.

"We are accounted righteous before God, only for the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ by Faith, and not for our own works, or deservings: wherefore, that we are justified by Faith only is a most wholesome doctrine, and very full of comfort, as more largely is expressed in the Homily of Justification."

* Exposition of the 10th Article.

If man as a sinner is dead in trespasses and sins, as his restoration to the image of his Maker can only be by preventing grace, his pardon and acceptance can only be through the Redemption that is in Christ; *whom God hath set forth as a Propitiation through faith in his blood.* The Article declares that we are *accounted* righteous only for the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. "We may take notice by the way, how our being justified is here expressed by our being *accounted* righteous; and not by our being *made* righteous. For it is not by the inhesion of Grace in us, but by the imputation of Righteousness to us that we are justified; as it is not by the imputation of Righteousness to us, but by the inhesion of Grace in us that we are sanctified. Thus we find the Apostle speaking of the justification of *Abraham*, saying *Abraham* believed God, *and it was counted unto him for righteousness.*—Rom. iv. 3. And again, *But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.*—v. 5. And if faith is accounted for righteousness we must needs be accounted righteous by faith, and so we be justified by faith that is accounted for righteousness to us, not by Grace as a principle of righteousness in us. Which also further appears, in that Justification is here stated to be of the ungodly, *Who justifieth the ungodly.* For so long as a man is ungodly, he cannot be said to be justified by any inward and inherent; but only by an outward and imputed righteousness; so that justification is properly opposed to accusation.—How was Christ made sin for us? Not by our sins inherent in him, that is horrid Blasphemy; but by our sins imputed to him, that is true Divinity. And as he was made sin for us, not by the inhesion of our sins in him,

but by the imputation of our sins to him, so are we made the righteousness of God in him by the imputation of his righteousness to us, not by the inherence of his righteousness in us. He was accounted as a sinner, and therefore punished for us; we are accounted as righteous, and therefore glorified in him. Our sins were laid upon him, and therefore he died for us in time; his righteousness is laid upon us, and therefore we shall live with him to eternity."*

The Apostle tells us that it is of Faith that it might be by Grace, and opposes the law of Faith to the law of Works. In our Sanctification faith and works are so conjoined, that the one is the cause, the other the effect; the one the good tree, the other the good fruit which it produces. But in Justification, faith and works stand in opposition to each other. Justification by Faith, being Justification by Grace, is subversive of Justification by Works; and Justification by Works, destructive of Justification by Grace. The existence of the one is so incompatible with the existence of the other, that to attempt to reconcile them, is an attempt to reconcile a contradiction in terms. "If it be of Grace it is no more of Works," &c. It is strange that so sensible and pious a writer as Bishop Burnet, should, in his Exposition of this Article have represented the Faith by which we are justified, as the complex of Christianity, in opposition to the Law which stands generally as the complex of the whole Mosaical dispensation. "So that the *faith of Christ* is equivalent to this, the Gospel of Christ; because Christianity is a federal religion, founded, on God's part, on

* Exposition of the 11th Article, by Bishop Beveridge.

the promises that he has made to us, and on the rules he has set us; and, on our part, on our believing that revelation, our trusting to these promises, and our setting ourselves to follow those rules." According to this doctrine, we are justified partly by faith and partly by works. This is explaining an Article, by flying in the face of it, and of the most pointed declarations of St. Paul upon which it rests. This misrepresentation is the more remarkable, as in the explanation of the terms of the Article, his Lordship observes that, "By good works, therefore, are meant acts of true holiness, and of sincere obedience to the laws of the Gospel." Let us then take the Article according to his own comment. "We are accounted righteous before God, only for the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and not for our acts of true holiness, and of sincere obedience to the laws of the Gospel." The Article, therefore, according to his own explanation, declares, in direct opposition to his own doctrine, that we are not justified by faith as the complex of Christianity, but by faith as it embraces the merits of Christ. This excellent man, for such we truly believe him to have been, through the whole of the Eleventh Article, is perpetually staggering between the faith of the Gospel, (as it is accurately expressed by his own Church,) and a modern scheme of Divinity, equally hostile to the doctrine of Scripture and of the Church of England. How much better does he write when he afterwards observes, "That the Reformers began as they ought to have done, at the laying down this as the foundation of all Christianity and of all our hopes, that we were reconciled to God merely through his mercy, by the Redemption purchased by Jesus Christ, and that a firm believing the Gospel, and claiming to the death of Christ as

the great Propitiation for our sins, according to the terms on which it is offered in the Gospel, was that which united us to Christ, that gave us an interest in his death, and thus justified us." He immediately adds, "If in the management of this controversy, there was not so critical a judgment made of the scope of several passages of St. Paul's Epistles; and if the dispute became afterwards too abstracted and metaphysical, that was the effect of the infelicity of that time, and was the natural consequence of much disputing. Therefore, though we do not now stand to all the arguments, and to all the citations and illustrations," &c.—"And therefore the approbation given here to the Homily is only, an approbation of the doctrine asserted and proved in it: which ought not to be carried to every particular of the proofs or explanations that are in it." This is a pretty modest apology, for departing from the doctrine of the Reformers in general, and of the Fathers of his own Church in particular, who were at least at as much pains to enter, and fully as capable of entering, into the Apostle's reasoning, as any of the later Divines, who have attempted to establish a late Evangelical Theology. Hooker, who, perhaps, has seldom been equalled, and never in modern times excelled, has, in his discourse on Justification, with a lucidity and comprehension of thought, peculiar almost to himself, so forcibly stated the Justification taught in the Gospel, that he who comes from reading and studying his luminous interpretation, to read and to study the Bishop's dark and perplexed Exposition, will find himself in the condition of a man who has exchanged the meridian blaze of the sun, for the twilight of a grated dungeon. Something of the same feeling will also accompany the reader, who lays down the Homily on the subject, and takes up the Expo-

dition. If his Lordship thought that the difference between Justification by Grace through Faith, and Justification by Faith as the complement of Christianity; or in other words, the difference between Justification only by Faith, and Justification partly by Faith and partly by Works, was a dispute too abstracted and metaphysiced; with all his excellencies, we cannot but think him to have fallen into a dangerous error. He further observes, that "By faith only is not to be meant; faith as it is separated from the other Evangelical graces and virtues, but faith as it is opposite to the rites of the Ceremonial Law." That Faith is a principle of holiness, is a doctrine controverted by none but Sandhmanians and Antinomians, and consequently is always followed by the other Evangelical graces and virtues; but these being the consequents, not the antecedents of justifying faith, according to the Twelfth Article, cannot possibly have any share in our Justification. To say that they make a part of our Justification, is the same thing as to affirm, that the fruits which a tree produces are a part of the tree, and were planted with it. As the fruits of Justification cannot, in the nature of things, make a part of it; so Justification by the merits of Christ received by faith, is utterly inconsistent with the supposition that we are in any part justified by our own virtues.

Bishop Burnet, as we have seen before, is sometimes obliged, by the consciousness of his weakness, to abandon his system, and to take refuge in the true doctrine of the Gospel. "This (the article of Justification by Faith only, and not for our works or deservings) is a doctrine full of comfort. For if we did believe that our Justification was founded upon our inherent justice or sanctification, as the consideration on which we receive it, we should

have just cause of fear and dejection ; since we could not reasonably promise ourselves so great a blessing upon so poor a consideration."—Having observed that we are justified by faith, as it is opposite to the rites of the Mosaic Law, the Bishop proceeds, " For that was the great question that gave occasion to St. Paul's writing so fully upon this head ; since many Judaizing Christians, as they acknowledged Christ to be the true Messiah, so they thought that the Law of Moses was still to retain its force : in opposition to whom St. Paul says, that we are justified by Faith without the works of the Law. It is plain that he means the Mosaic dispensation ; for he had divided all mankind into those who were in the Law, and those who were without the Law ; that is, unto Jews and Gentiles. Nor has St. Paul any occasion to treat of other matter, in those epistles, or to enter into nice abstractions, which became not one who was to instruct the world in order to their salvation. Those metaphysical notions are not easily apprehended by plain men, not accustomed to such subtleties : and are of very little value when they are more critically distinguished." Robert Barclay, in his *Apology for the Quakers*, (Prop. vii.) in attempting to prove that we are justified by our sanctification and good works ; or in other words, that Justification and Sanctification are the same thing, explains the phrase " without the deeds of the law," and similar expressions of the Apostle, precisely in the same way that the Bishop has done.

As the point the Apologist had to prove was the identity of the two words *Justification* and *Sanctification*, it was necessary for him to disentangle himself from the expressions which seemed to exclude works from the office of justifying, for these were a dead weight upon his

cause. But the Bishop, who observes that "The Scripture speaks of Sanctification as a distinct thing from, and subsequent to, Justification," one would have thought, had no occasion for such subterfuges. The real design however was to make out his Justification by Faith as the complex of Christianity, or, in plain language, by Faith and Works together. The Apologist has at least a claim to consistency; but the Bishop's explanation is contradictory, and absolutely *felix de se*. If Sanctification be subsequent to Justification, which he acknowledges (and even the Apologist is forced at least to confess it) to be the doctrine of Scripture, it is impossible that it can make either a part, or a condition of it, as we are first justified and then sanctified. Were any man to affirm that the acts of loyalty and patriotism, which had afterwards been performed by a malefactor, who had received his Majesty's free pardon, were the cause and condition of his receiving it, he would fall into an absurdity of precisely the same kind. Besides, the thirteenth Article declares that "Works done before the grace of Christ, and the inspiration of his Spirit are not pleasant to God, forasmuch as they spring not of Faith in Jesus Christ, neither do they make men meet to receive grace, or (as the School-authors say) deserve grace of congruity: yea rather, for that they are not done as God hath willed and commanded them to be done, we doubt not but they have the nature of sin." No Clergyman of the Church of England will be hardy enough to venture the assertion, that we are justified by our sins. The distresses to which some Divines have reduced themselves by endeavouring to reconcile Justification by works to the eleventh and thirteenth Articles of the Church, were it not for the awful seriousness of the subject, would appear almost

equally comical and ridiculous as the bangs and bruises of Don Quixote and his Squire.

No man can be justified by that which he has not. If Justification be by Faith, he who is without Faith cannot be justified. If it be by good works, he who has not good works cannot be justified. It is the doctrine of the Church of England, that no man has good works antecedent to his Justification. It is therefore the doctrine of the Church of England that we are justified by Faith, and not by works. The reasoning is equally conclusive against Justification by Faith and works together. That which does not exist before Justification can no more make a part, than it can the whole of Justification. This subject is well illustrated by Dr. Marsh, in his "Reply to Dr. Milner's Strictures." "Let it be *granted* to the Calvinists that according to the eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth Articles, the performance of good works is neither a *cause*, nor a *condition*, of Justification." He accordingly acknowledges that, in the interpretation of the *Eleventh Article*, "the Calvinists were *right*, and the Anti-Calvinists were wrong, and allows that in it works are mentioned in contradistinction to Faith."—p. 109. "I admitted," says he, "the *weakness* of the various attempts, which have been made to *introduce works* into the interpretation of that Article. I added, if, where the terms are so *precise*, we plead for a *latitude* of interpretation, there is no Confession of Faith, to which our Articles may not be rendered subservient. But, if the eleventh Article were *less* precise, the twelfth and thirteenth Articles would remove the question beyond the possibility of doubt. The one declares that 'works done *before* Justification have the nature of *sin*;' whence it follows, that Justification must take place, be-

fore a *good* work is possible. The other accordingly asserts that good works follow *after* Justification. But causes and conditions, *qualify* them how you will, must *precede* the effect to be produced. I further admitted the weakness of the attempt to introduce good works, by making them *qualifications* in the party to be justified. I declared that that which no one can possess till he is justified, can never be a qualification in the person to be justified."—p. 110.

Dr. Marsh has represented the doctrine of Justification by Faith, or by works, as a point at issue between Calvinists and Anti-Calvinists. This is doing an honour to the Calvinists to which they have no right; and an injury to the Arminians, for which they have given no occasion. Whoever has read the Works of Arminius knows, that that celebrated Divine declared his readiness to subscribe to the doctrine taught by Calvin, on the subject of Justification. Many most respectable Divines of the Church, who have not believed in the doctrine of Absolute Election, have given their decided testimony to the doctrine of Justification by Faith. We need only mention Bishops Sherlock, Horne, Horsely, &c. &c. Two very respectable private Clergymen, well known in the literary world, Mr. Faber and Mr. Gisborne, have written in support of this doctrine of the Reformation. It were easy to mention many other respectable names, both among the Bishops and Clergy. The Bishop of Lincoln, indeed, has, in his Refutation of Calvinism, treated this as a peculiarity of that system, and attacked this doctrine which Dr. Marsh has so solidly and fully established. "Neither in our Articles, nor in our Liturgy, is it said, that Faith without good works will justify."—"Let it be remarked, that whenever St. Paul, in speaking of Justification, uses

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the words '*Works or Deeds*,' he invariably adds, 'of the Law.' He frequently says a man is not justified by the works of the Law, but not once does he say, a man is not justified by works." How much his Lordship has been mistaken on this head, has been shown by two who have written answers to his Refutation, Dr. Williams, and Mr. Scott. "His Lordship," says the former of these writers, "has hazarded the assertion too hastily, when he says that whenever St. Paul, speaking of Justification uses the words '*Works or Deeds*,' he invariably adds, 'of the Law:' for thus the Apostle reasons, 'If Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory, but not before God.'—'To him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his Faith is counted for righteousness. Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works'.—Rom. iv. 2, 5, 6. And what he says of Salvation is, *a fortiori*, applicable to Justification. 'For by grace are ye saved, through Faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God; not of works; lest any man should boast; for we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.'—Eph. ii. 8, 9, 10. 'Who hath saved us' (in which Salvation, Justification is necessarily included), 'and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus, before the world began.'—2 Tim. i. 9. 'Not by works of Righteousness, which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us.'—Titus, iii. 5. From these and similar passages, what can be more evident than the Apostle's design to exclude, not only the merits of our works, but also our works them-

salves, good works, works of righteousness, from having any part in our Justification?"*

We return to the last quotation from Bishop Burnet: "Nor had St. Paul any occasion to treat of any other matter, in those Epistles, or to enter into nice abstractions which became not one that was to instruct the world in order to their salvation. These metaphysical notions are not easily apprehended by plain men, not accustomed to such subtleties; and are of very little value when they are more critically distinguished." This is language altogether unworthy of Bishop Burnet, and of the subject which he treats. It becomes no uninspired Minister of Christianity to say what became not the Apostle Paul, when by the Spirit of God he unfolded the great mystery of our Redemption and Salvation. What the Apostle has done, not what became him to do, is the subject of investigation. All attempts to establish the doctrine of Justification by reasoning, *a priori*, must be presumptuous. The doctrine of Justification by Faith through Grace is no mere abstraction, no metaphysical notion, no subtlety, as applied to sinners, who being already condemned for their evil works, can never be justified by what their condemnation declares them not to have—good works. The doctrine of Justification by Faith, without works, will not easily, nay will not possibly, be apprehended by those who have not the sentence of death in themselves; but he who feels the condemnation of guilt, and beholds by Faith the Lamb of God who taketh away the sins of the world, will, *through the Spirit wait for*

* P. p. 113, 114. See also Mr. Scott's Remarks, on Chap. II, of the Bishop's Refutation.

the hope of righteousness by faith. "Were Christianity," says an author who had studied this subject much more accurately than Bishop Burnet, "to be preached to a new race of men, created without spot or sin, or stain of guilt, they might well wonder at the conditions of Faith, and Repentance, as the doctrine of Salvation by the righteousness of Christ, and not by their own, and that their happiness should depend not upon their own works, but upon the free grace and promise of God; they might well ask, Why should God make that a matter of free grace and promise, which must be the necessary effect and consequence of his justice? Why may we not be saved by our own righteousness, since righteousness has a natural claim to happiness? What should we repent of, who have done no harm? Or what other object have we for faith than the justice of God, which is the foundation upon which religion stands? But should this new race fall from innocence, and stand liable to the punishments of vice, should you then ask them where their hopes were, they would not answer, I presume, in the justice of God, or argue upon the right that virtue has to a reward, but, could they express any hope, it would be in the mercy and forgiveness of God. And whence must this forgiveness come? Is it the gift of God, or is it the reward of sin? If it is the gift of God, then it is free grace."*

We shall make but one quotation more from Bishop Burnet on the eleventh Article. "In strictness of words, we are not *justified* till the final sentence is pronounced; till, upon our death, we are solemnly acquitted of our sins,

* Bishop Sherlock's Discourses. Dis. 52.

and admitted into the presence of God; this being that which is opposite to *condemnation*, yet, as a man who is in that state that must end in *condemnation* is said to be *condemned already*, and the *wrath of God* is said to *abide upon him*, though he be not yet adjudged to it; so, on the contrary, a man in that state which must end in the full enjoyment of God, is said now to be *justified*, and to be at peace with God; because he not only has the promises of that state now belonging to him, when he does perform the conditions required in them, but is likewise receiving daily marks of God's favour, the protection of his providence, the ministry of angels, and the inward assistances of his grace and spirit." By the Bishop's words it would appear, that he teaches us to expect only the pledge of justification, and not the blessing itself, in the present life. He had, in the beginning of his Exposition of the Article, explained Justification as that which brought us into the grace and favour of God, and which put us into a state of acceptance with him. He surely could not mean that in strictness of words no man is brought into a state of favour and acceptance with God in this life; for he afterwards speaks of a pious man's receiving daily marks of God's favour, and yet it appears impossible to give any other natural interpretation to his words. Upon these principles, therefore, according to the thirteenth Article there never was, and there never can be, any such thing as a good work performed in this world. The Bishop does not betake himself to the doctrine of a two-fold Justification, the refuge of many later writers, which was prepared for them by Dr. Taylor, of Norwich, but of which there is not a vestige in Scripture, in the Articles, Homilies, or Fathers of the Church of England. How he could have escaped from contradiction, had he

been pressed on this subject, seems difficult to conceive. When he represents a man in this life brought into a state that *must* end in the full enjoyment of God, he passes over into the regions of Calvinism; though of this doctrine he makes a recantation in the very next page. In short, from the confusion and contradiction into which his rejection of the doctrine, plainly taught in the Article, ran him; from the necessity imposed on him of apparently explaining what his tenets induced him to oppose, he has left a striking exhibition, how little learning and excellent abilities are able to do in opposition to the simplicity of truth.

A writer of still superior abilities to Bishop Burnet, Bishop Warburton, in his *Divine Legation of Moses*, has, with that herculean force which in a good cause attended his grasp, demonstrated that Justification is not by Works, but by Faith. We have room only for the following statement. "Supposing St. Paul really to hold that immortality was attached to works, it would contradict the other reasoning which both he himself and the Author of the Epistle to the Hebrews urged so cordially against the second error of the Jewish converts; namely, of *immortality's* being attached to *works*, or that *Justification* was by *works* under the Gospel: for to confute this error, they prove as we have shown, that it was *faith* which *justified*, not only under the Gospel, but under the Law also. If immortality were indeed offered through *works*, by the Law, then *Justification by Faith*, one of the great fundamental doctrines of Christianity, would be infringed. For then *Faith* could, at best, be only supposed to make up the defect of *works*, in such a sense as to enable works to justify." With reference to what he declares, with respect to Justification by Faith, as one of

the *great fundamental* doctrines of Christianity, he adds the following note :—" This I shall show hereafter ; and endeavour to rescue it from the madness of enthusiasm, on the one hand, and the absurdity of the common system on the other, and yet not betray it, in explaining it away, under the *fashionable* pretence of delivering the *Scripture doctrine* of it."—Book vi. Sec. 4. How far the Bishop has redeemed this pledge in his Ninth Book, we shall not at present inquire.—We have the admission of the vigorous and manly mind of Dr. Marsh, that the doctrine of Justification by works, either in whole or in part, is a pest utterly untenable, and that Justification by Faith alone, without works, is an impregnable fort which never should have been attacked, and that the defenders of it ever have been, and ever must be, victorious. Bishop Warburton declares that the *common and fashionable* mode of explaining the doctrine of Justification is, to *explain it away*, and to betray the doctrine of Scripture, under the pretext of delivering it. These are confessions of the highest importance, and upon a subject which embraces the hopes and fears of men for eternity. If the general body of professed Christians, as both these writers affirm, directly or indirectly, are building upon a foundation that cannot support the hopes of a sinner, for pardon and reconciliation with God ; and are doing that in opposition to the most explicit declarations and warnings from Himself, who points to his Son as the only foundation ; and if many of those who claim to be the Ministers of Christianity, instead of directing men to build upon a rock, instruct them to raise a superstructure upon the sand (and this is nothing more than these two writers allow), the consequences are likely to be tremendously serious. A mistake on this subject is so in-

initely dangerous, that pious men, who unhappily have not always preserved the accurate statement of the Scripture, yet in their happier hours, when they approach it, and tread this awful ground with more measured and cautious steps, forget their former mazes, and in the light of Divine truth find the Cross of Christ to be the life of the world, and every other refuge to be hopeless and vain.

A concern for the interests of practical religion and morality is the pretext, with which those who are hostile to the Scripture doctrine of Justification by Faith, cover their attacks upon it, though many of them as decidedly oppose themselves to the strictness of the morality the Gospel teaches, as to the doctrine of Reconciliation which it proposes. Others, it must be confessed, are men of different principles and aims, but have had their judgments warped by fears and alarms, that have arisen from the licentious conduct of some who have adopted the doctrine, and wantoned in injustice or in intemperance. There is scarcely a doctrine of Natural, or of Revealed Religion, which is not liable to abuse, and which has not been abused. The mercy of God is the only refuge of sinners, and yet there is not a day that passes in which we do not see men abusing it. The long-suffering of God is a part of his moral character to which we all owe much, and yet "because sentence against an evil work is not speedily executed, the hearts of the children of men are set in them to do evil." Shall we, therefore, cast a veil over the mercy and patience of God, lest sinners should continue to abuse them? Shall we not rather endeavour to awaken their minds to this consideration, that the abuse of Divine mercy and patience will constitute the most awful condemnation; and the longer

the blow is suspended, it will strike with the more transfixing agony at last. If men will abuse the doctrine of Justification by grace through Faith, they are bringing upon their own heads such thunderbolts of Divine vengeance as cannot even glance upon rebel angels, and preparing themselves for a hell, which God has not prepared even for devils. But because Hypocrites, and Enthusiasts, and Antinomians, will talk of Justification by Faith in Christ, while they "burst his bands and cast his cords away from them," shall we discard that doctrine of Acceptance which alone opens the door of mercy to sinners, and admits them through the blood of Christ to pardon and peace; that walking in the light of God's countenance and in good works here, they may, by the mercy of God, attain to everlasting glory in the world to come.

Though good works cannot put away our sins, nor endure the severity of God's judgments, yet they hold a high and a distinguished place in the Christian system. Though they are not the foundation, they are the gold, the silver, and the precious stones, the superstructure to be built on the true foundation. Those who contend for Justification by Faith in Christ, and those who contend for Justification by good works, differ exceedingly in the place they assign to the latter, in their different systems, but in the necessity of them to final Salvation, they are perfectly agreed, as will appear from the following considerations.—First. The most strenuous advocates for the doctrine of Justification by Faith, are equally strenuous in asserting the inseparable connexion between Justification and Sanctification; that no man ever was, or will be, *justified*, without being *sanctified*; and of Sanctification, good works are the immediate germ which ripens

into fruit, "in some sixty, and in others an hundred fold." Were Justification by Faith alone to be taught as a solitary doctrine, unconnected with the other doctrines of the Gospel, it might be attended with the most mischievous consequences; but taught as a part of the Christian system, in connexion with holiness and good works, it cannot be abused but intentionally, and will only be so, by deliberate wickedness; an abuse against which it is impossible to provide.—Second. Though holiness and good works are not the foundation, yet are they the very object of Christianity. Of the religion of innocence, holiness and good works were the foundation, as well as the object, and upon them all the hopes of man, before the fall, rested, and rested securely; but the hopes of innocence being forfeited by the rebellion of man against his Creator, his sanctity and good works being gone, and new hopes being communicated to him, by God through the Redemption that is in his Son, the Saviour being *the hope of Israel*, his Atonement became the foundation, and holiness and good works the superstructure to be raised upon it. But even the Mediation of Christ, and the influences of the Holy Spirit are *only* the MEANS, and not the END of religion. They are necessary to bring us to God, and to restore us to his image; but holiness and good works are the great END for which these mighty means are employed. He who supposes that he can gain any benefit from religion, without attaining the END of all religion, must have an understanding so besotted, as well as a heart so corrupted, that while he continues in that state, all arguments must be lost upon him.—Third. The end for which our Saviour laid down his life was to purchase to himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. Now, he who seriously believes this to

have been the intention of his Saviour, in the Redemption purchased by his blood, cannot but know that unless he attain this high prize of his calling, he can have no interest in the Saviour; and that good works are as necessary to justify his Faith to men, and to his own conscience, as Faith is to justify him before God.—Fourth. Good works are called the fruits of the Spirit. These, with the holy dispositions from which they proceed, are the only evidences that cannot be counterfeited, of our having the Spirit of God. So that in proportion as a man abounds in the works of righteousness, he abounds in the evidences of God's Spirit dwelling in him; and in proportion as he is defective in the works of Faith, and in the labours of love, his evidences of it must be scanty and defective; and, if he has no good works, or lives in sinful habits, he not only has no evidence at all that he is the Temple of God, by the Spirit; but the most decisive proof that he is dead in trespasses and sins.—Fifth. The doctrine of Justification by Faith in the Atonement of Christ, through which we have peace with God, is perfectly consistent with the doctrine of all men's being judged according to their works, at the last day. The first of these doctrines is not more forcibly stated by St. Paul, than the last of them is by our Saviour and his Apostles. "They that have done good, shall come forth to the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, to the resurrection of damnation." Works, according to our Saviour's statement, will then be the only subject of trial, at that awful audit, and he who has neglected to practise justice and charity, has no other sentence to receive than "Depart from me thou cursed, into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels." He who believes this to be true, and every christian believes it, cannot but

know, that good works are as necessary to his final acquittal, by the sentence of his Saviour, before assembled worlds, as a lively Faith in the Saviour is to his present justification before God.—Sixth. Though Faith does not justify as a principle of holiness, for this would be Justification not by Christ's Atonement, but by our own Sanotification, yet the Faith of the Gospel is a holy principle, and by this it is distinguished from a mere assent to the doctrines of Christianity, which leaves the heart unregenerated and the conduct uninfluenced by them. This last sort of faith, St. James calls the faith of devils, because it consists with the most atrocious guilt, and with the most deliberate rebellion. Those Ministers of Christianity who are the most zealous in preaching Justification by Faith in the Saviour, are generally most guarded in securing the doctrine against abuse, by directing their hearers to form the estimate of the sincerity of their Faith, from the purity of their principles, and the sincerity of their obedience; and by teaching that no Faith is genuine which does not purify the heart and the life, and work by love to God and man, disposing men to "adorn the Gospel by living soberly, righteously, and godly in this present evil world."—Seventh. It is a fact acknowledged by those who have been decidedly inimical to the doctrine of Justification by Faith only, that those who adopt it, place the glory of God, not only in the first rank, but in the first place in the first rank of those duties which are the impulsive motives of Christian action. To do all to the glory of God, is a proposition they apply not only to the services of religion, but also to the government, and to the indulgence of those appetites which, for the wisest purposes, are implanted in the human frame. "Whether ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." Now, good works

are those fruits which in the highest degree conduce to promote the honour of God, and the glory of that religion which came from him. "Hereby is my Father glorified, that ye bring forth much fruit." "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your father who is in Heaven." He who does not venerate, with supreme affection, the dignity and honour of him whom he calls his Heavenly Father, must be a stranger to that intercommunity of tenderness, which such a relation tends to impress. He must be an alien, not a Son of God.—Eighth. The love of God and of the Saviour rises immediately out of that Faith by which a Christian is justified. Faith worketh by love, so that love to God is not only a great and powerful principle in the Christian's breast, but also a principle that his Faith kindles, and supplies with a constant and holy flame. But the love of God is not only a powerful feeling, but a fixed principle, which disposes Christians to please God, and to do his will, in all things. This is the love of God that we do his commandments; and our blessed Saviour has placed this as the only decisive evidence of our gratitude to him, for his dying love. "If ye love me, keep my commandments." Faith in that righteousness which is by Jesus Christ on all them who receive the Gospel, tends, above all other considerations, to awaken and to inflame that fire which burns with a sacred heat in the heart of a Christian. That sort of obedience which the fear of hell, or which the hope of making a good bargain with God, (that a man, as Dr. South observes, may have a good penny-worth for his penny,) will never inspire the mind with any generous feelings, or with any exalted sentiments of love and obedience. Every thing that is above his selfish principles, is beyond his aims.

But the Christian, to whom much has been forgiven, will love much. In him the remembrance of the Garden of *Gethsemane*, and of mount *Calvary*, will create motives of action, and invigorate them with an energy that will rise as much superior to those of selfishness, as the heavens rise above the earth. Mount *Sinai*, with its blackness, and thunder, and tempest, has every thing to blast, but nothing to fertilize, or to water the parched shrubs that cling to its thirsty soil. Like mount *Gilboa*, it gives no rain, or dew, or fields of offerings. It is on the hills of *Zion* alone that the dews of *Hermon* fall, and it is there that God commands the blessing, even life for evermore.

ARTICLE XVII.—OF PREDESTINATION AND ELECTION.

“Predestination to life is the everlasting purpose of God, whereby (before the foundations of the world were laid) he hath constantly decreed by his council, secret to us, to deliver from curse and damnation those whom he hath chosen in Christ out of mankind, and to bring them by Christ to everlasting salvation, as vessels made to honour. Wherefore they which be indued with so excellent a benefit of God, be called according to God’s purpose, by his Spirit working in due season. They through grace obey the calling, they be justified freely, they be made sons of God by adoption, they be made like the image of his only begotten Son Jesus Christ; they walk religiously in good works; and at length, by God’s mercy, they attain to everlasting felicity.

“As the godly consideration of Predestination, and our Election in Christ, is full of sweet, pleasant, and unspeakable comfort to godly persons, and such as feel in them-

selves the working of the Spirit of Christ, mortifying the works of the flesh; and their earthly members, and drawing up their mind to high and heavenly things, as well because it doth greatly establish and confirm their faith of eternal salvation to be enjoyed through Christ, as because it doth fervently kindle their love towards God: so for curious and carnal persons, lacking the Spirit of Christ, to have continually before their eyes the sentence of God's predestination, is a most dangerous downfall, whereby the devil doth thrust them either into desperation, or into wretchlessness of most unclean living, no less perilous than desperation.

"Furthermore, we must receive God's promises in such wise as they be generally set forth to us in holy Scripture; and, in our doings, that will of God is to be followed, which we have expressly declared unto us, in the word of God."

Never was beleagured city attacked and defended with greater obstinacy, than the intent of this Article. The Calvinists of the Church have considered it as the firm bulwark of their cause, and as presenting an impregnable front to all the artillery of their enemies. The Arminians have also taken up their post in it, and thought themselves sufficiently safe in its intrenchments to hoist the flag of defiance, and even to attack their opponents. Thus, all the war between these two parties has been transferred to this, as the citadel where the last battle is to be fought, and conquest, or defeat, to crown or to disgrace, the victors and the vanquished. It has occurred to a few, and but to a few, that by a friendly compromise, they might meet on common ground; and so far adjust their opposite claims, as to give and take mutual quarter. This observation, however, can apply only to those who

are equally the friends of Evangelical Religion. Those who in their sentiments are directly at issue on the interpretation of the ninth, tenth, eleventh, and thirteenth Articles, cannot find a spot of undebatable ground, in the whole compass of this Article.

The Calvinists have attempted to prove, and certainly have succeeded in proving, that the private sentiments of those who compiled the Articles, were so far Calvinistic, as decidedly to embrace the doctrine of Absolute Election, and its necessary consequence, the doctrine of Final Perseverance. To those who are conversant with the writings of the most distinguished Divines (with the exception of Latimer) of the Church of England, from the reign of Edward down to that of James, no other proof is necessary to convince them of the fact. Those who have not attained to an extensive acquaintance with the writings of the Fathers and founders of the English Church, may obtain much satisfaction from the celebrated work of Mr. Overton, "The True Churchman ascertained." In the second Section of the second Chapter of that work, Mr. Overton has produced the testimonies of Hume, Mosheim, the Editors of the New Annual Register, the Critical Reviewers, Dr. Robertson, Bishop Burnet, and of Drs. MacLaine, Wilson, Smollet, &c. none of whom were Calvinists themselves, but barely relate the matter on their credit, as critics, or historians. To the testimony of the opponents of Calvinism, he adds that of its friends, of Davenant, Carleton, Hall, Ward, Usher, and Whitaker, who, he adds, "both held these sentiments themselves, and are unanimous in declaring that they were the common sentiments of the founders of our Church." Dr. Heylin, a celebrated Arminian, and by no means an impartial writer, acknowledges that in the Reformers of the English

Church there was a general tendency to Calvin's opinions, and confesses that he could find no evidence that any one had publicly opposed these sentiments in the University of Oxford, till after the beginning of King James's reign. He even admits that during Charles the First's reign, the maintainers of the Anti-Calvinistic doctrines were but few in number, and in the History of the Church make but a very thin appearance,—

"Apparent taci sunt in gurgite verba."

Mr. Overton quotes to the same purpose, the testimony of Bishop Cleaver, and of Mr. Gray.

Of the chain of evidence that the private sentiments of the English reformers were generally, what are now called Calvinistic, the Lambeth Articles, though of no public authority, constitute a strong link. In the year 1595, Lady Margaret's Professor, and William Barrett, fellow of Gonvill and Caius' College, in the University of Cambridge, openly preached and inveighed against the doctrines of Calvin. Articles were drawn up at Lambeth, under the eye and direction of Archbishop Whitgift, with the concurrence of some other dignitaries of the Church, and were sent down to Cambridge to be the standard of doctrine in that University. Those Articles, which are Calvinistic in a very high degree, did not advance a claim to any new imposition on the minds of those to whom they were directed. They claimed only to be a genuine exposition of the doctrines of the Church. Now, though the comment went far beyond the text, it is self-evident, that no men in their right senses would ever have attempted to force the reception of them upon an individual, much less upon a whole University. Had it not

been *generally* allowed that the seventeenth Article of the Church was, to a certain degree, Calvinistic.—There are various parts, however, of the system of Calvin which are not admitted into the Article, as Mr. Archdeacon Welshman, and almost all others who have commented on it, observe. It makes no mention whatever of Reprobation, or of Preterition, which in Calvin's system, as Mr. Scott confesses, occupies as prominent a place, and employs as much discussion, as Election. It does not represent the fall of man as the consequence of a Divine decree. It does not confine the Redemption by the death of Christ to the Elect, but extends it to all mankind.

But if the compilers of the Articles believed in the doctrine of Absolute Election, and if they meant to express that doctrine by the seventeenth Article, as it seems highly reasonable from their well known sentiments to suppose they did, how can those who reject that doctrine, consistently with integrity sign the Article? The Articles, it must be observed, must be signed in their literal meaning, and if the compilers of this Article have left it ambiguous whether the election they adopt, be absolute or conditional, Anti-Calvinists think that they may fairly avail themselves of the latitude which that ambiguity gives it. "It is not to be denied," says Bishop Burnet in his Exposition of the Article, "but that the Article seems to be framed according to St. Austin's doctrine. It supposes men to be under a *curse* and *damnation*, antecedently to Predestination, from which they are delivered by it: so it is directly against the Supralapsarian doctrine. Nor does the Article make any mention of Reprobation, no, not in a hint: no definition is made concerning it. The Article does also seem to assert the *efficacy* of grace. That in which the whole knot of the difficulty lies, is

DOCTRINES OF THE UNITED CHURCH.

not defined; that is, Whether God's eternal purpose of decree was made according to what he foresaw his creatures would do; or purely upon an absolute will in order to his own glory? It is very probable, that those who penned it meant that the decree was absolute, but yet since they have not said it, those who subscribe the Articles do not seem to be bound to any thing that is not expressed in them: and therefore since the remonstrants do not deny but that God having foreseen what all mankind would, according to all the different circumstances in which they should be put, do or not do, he upon that, did by a firm and eternal decree, lay that whole design in all its branches, which he executes in time; they may subscribe this Article without renouncing their opinion as to this matter. On the other hand, the Calvinists have less occasion for scruple, since the Article does seem more plainly to favour them."

Some Anti-Calvinists, by way of reprisal, perhaps, for the charge of having acted disingenuously, uncharitably brought by some intemperate Calvinists against them, for their subscription to the seventeenth Article, have proceeded to recriminate by representing the Article as framed in opposition to irrelative decrees, and thus throwing back upon Calvinists in general, the censure which some of them had passed upon their opponents, on this question. It is worthy of our attention, to observe how different a tone many of the Anti-Calvinists have assumed on this subject, from Bishop Burnet, and many other Arminian writers of former times. It never occurred to the Bishop, that the Article was written against absolute decrees. He always is open and fair enough to declare, that the Article seems to be founded on St. Austin's doctrine; and that it seems more plainly to favour the Calvinists.

All he demanded for himself, and for those of his sentiments, was a right to subscribe it because it did not expressly declare that the decree was absolute. He was well acquainted with the beginning, with the progress, and with the principles of the Reformation in England, and with the writings of the Fathers of the English Church; and though he did not, on this subject, adopt their sentiments, he was a man of too stubborn integrity to represent them to be, what he knew they were not. But now, the most violent writers on the same side of the question, without ever studying the subject, and with very little knowledge of those writings from which alone they can be qualified to decide on the prevailing, and almost unanimous sentiments of the Church of England Fathers, take it upon them to settle the controversy, without the trouble of inquiry. Whether these gentlemen, despairing of success by a regular attack, expect to carry their point by a *coup de main*, we do not know; but they can have no rational hope of succeeding but by the project proposed by one of Cromwell's fanatical parliaments, to burn, or destroy all the records of the kingdom. Without such an overwhelming cause, no such effect can be produced. The mass of evidence, with respect to the sentiments of the English Reformers, is too unwieldy to be removed. Can any man have the hardihood to attempt, or the abilities to prove, that they who certainly believed in Absolute Election, framed an Article in opposition to their own convictions, to exclude themselves and all who should ever embrace their sentiments, from the Church of England? Doctrines may be controverted: on the head of conditional, and on the subject of unconditional Election, much has been said, and much may yet be said; but he who advances an hypothesis so absurd, has no

right to expect a reply. We have entered into the question no further, than to reprobate a mode of procedure, which, if tolerated, would be fatal to the truth of all history.— That Calvinist or that Arminian, who, on so mysterious a subject, has never felt any difficulties, has either thought little, or very superficially on the subject. There certainly are many things in Scripture which have strongly the appearance of absolute decrees; and the Arminian who thinks that moderate Calvinism has not a claim even to a serious examination, has studied the sacred volume either with strong prejudices, or with little reflection. There is in the Scriptures a variety of subjects, which it seems difficult, if not *impossible for us*, to reconcile with the doctrine of absolute decrees; and the Calvinist who supposes that the peculiarities of his system must command the assent of every pious and humble inquirer, and that he who cannot receive them is destitute of spiritual discernment, needs to be more imbued with the spirit of charity than he is at present.

Of late years it has become the fashion, not only for heroes, whose prowess has been tried in the field, to enter the lists with Calvinists; but several doughty warriors, whose strength is hardly equal to trail, whose sinews refuse to poise, and whose skill is inadequate to aim a common dart, must needs break a lance with the first Calvinists they can find. These men little think what mischief they are doing to the cause for which they contend. When, after a few vapourings, they are driven from the field, and leave the spectators of the combat to infer the strength of Calvinism, from their weakness and folly. Other writers, in whom many excellencies are combined, by confounding the doctrines of Original sin; Justification by Faith, and Regeneration, with the peculiarities of Cal-

vinism, have given the latter a new root and vigour, by grafting it on the fundamental principles of Christianity. They have converted to Calvinism, even the Arminian Methodists. But there is too much piety among the followers of Mr. Wesley, to admit of their co-operation in rooting out the doctrines of Grace, from the hope that Calvinism will die with them.

PARTIES IN THE CHURCH.

IN a despotic government, the existence of parties would be absolutely incompatible with the authority of the Monarch, and with the quiet of society. In a free state, the existence of opposite parties is necessary to its liberty, and is the badge of its freedom. In the Legislative Assemblies of the Corsican, disputes were unknown. The members were only the puppets that moved, as the hand behind the curtain directed them. If any of them became restiff, and tried to emancipate themselves from his grasp, they quickly disappeared, and were either sent to drag a life of wretchedness in some of his bastiles, or were doomed to perish by the dagger of some assassin. Did they secretly conspire to remonstrate as a body, they were driven by the tyrant's power, or scattered by his breath into exile. In the British Parliament, every measure of government is examined, its project criticised, and all its faults exposed. The Minister of the day is not more safely intrenched behind the prerogative of his Sovereign, than his opponents are sheltered by the sacred rampart of

the Constitution. When the power of the Pope over Europe was absolute and uncontrollable, Princes were condemned to kiss his toes, and if any one rebelled he was hurled from his throne by the thunder of the Vatican. Whoever dared even to express a doubt of the Supreme Pontiff's Infallibility was immediately concluded to be a heretic; and, as the foe of God and man, committed to the flames. In the Church of Rome, though the reins of spiritual tyranny are considerably relaxed by the spirit of liberty which the Reformation has scattered, the chains of Ecclesiastical despotism are still severely felt, and either bind the genius of liberty or strongly repress it. The same Revolution that gave freedom to our Parliaments conferred it on the Church, and the consequences have been the same in both. Under the broad shade of British liberty, men of very different political sentiments find cover and protection, and even the discrepancy of their ideas, like the different parts of music, furnish an agreeable and salutary harmony. In the Church, those who serve, and those who worship at her altars, though discriminated from each other by the peculiarities of party distinction, suffer them for a while to be absorbed in the Liturgical service, with which the mother supplies all her children. Whatever the sentiments are which they feel, they join in expressing the same language of adoration, humility, and gratitude.

Those who are called the High Church Party, and with whom almost all the power and patronage of the Church were lodged in the reigns of the First and Second Charles, are now reduced to a small number. The two peculiarities of this party were,—First. A constant disposition to trench upon the liberties of the nation, by exalting the Royal prerogative. The passive obedience and non-re-

stances for which they contended, were not to the whole Legislature, as Dean Swift, in his *Sentiments of a Church of England-man*, would have us believe; but to the Monarch who was independent of Parliaments, and even in opposition to them. The former is a wholesome doctrine, and though a man may easily put a case, in which those in whom is the *Fee Simple*, might justly call the Trustees to an account, yet this is only a supposable thing, and not likely to happen in our times, at least; and being an extreme and improbable case, ought not to be generally descanted on. How true soever the right of resistance may be, as a speculative point, it is of so delicate an application that the discussion of it requires equal delicacy. The tendency of their doctrine however was, either to destroy the freedom of Parliament, by rendering it the mere tool of arbitrary power; or to change the government from a limited, to an absolute Monarchy.—Second. The belief that Episcopacy was absolutely necessary to the very being of a Christian Church. Had they argued for it, as the best mode of Ecclesiastical Government; had they contended for it, as that which certainly prevailed universally in the times nearest to those of the Apostles, and as, therefore, having the best title to be supposed of Apostolical authority; or, had they considered it as of Divine obligation, by founding it on the decisions of Scripture, their conduct would have been fair and irreprehensible. The greater part of Presbyterians and Independents claim a Divine constitution for their forms of government; but so far as we know, the most bigoted of the bigots, of either the one or the other, never pleaded for their platform as absolutely necessary to the existence of a Christian Society, and to the validity of the sacramental seals.—The moderate advocates for Episcopacy think they

have sufficient scope, in the writings of the Fathers, in the History of the Churches planted by the Apostles, in the Apostolical directions given to Timothy and to Titus, and in the comparative excellencies and defects of existing Churches, to show the advantages of Episcopal government. It becomes not, in their opinion, the advocates of a liberal Church to advance claims which would exclude themselves from charity, and their neighbours from heaven. They think it very possible, that the constitution of the Church of England, and of other Episcopal Churches, may be the most perfect, though they be not the only Churches in the world. The only perfection of Churches, as well as of men, which they know, is comparative ; but this always implies that there are more than one. To the order of Bishops they attach great importance, but to exalt that order to the depression of the great doctrines of Christianity, by representing them as more necessary to the existence of a Church, they think is to exalt them, (as the eagle in the fable elevated the tortoise,) only to dash them to pieces.—It cannot be denied, that many Clergymen of this party have been distinguished by eminence in piety, solidity of learning, and the greatest strictness of moral principle.

Those who are called Low Churchmen are now, and have long been, by much the most numerous party in the Church of England. Their political principles are in perfect union with the genuine spirit of the British Constitution. They have always been, and they continue to be, the determined foes of absolute government, and the resolute adherents of limited Monarchy. In them the Brunswick Succession found the most powerful and watchful auxiliaries, before it rose to the throne, and its firmest supports since its accession. During the first two

reigns after the Revolution, this party was, in the great body of the English Clergy, comparatively weak, and those who were called High Churchmen were, in the lower House of Convocation, much more powerful. Providentially the reins of government being in the hands of a bench of Bishops, who were men of moderate principles, and of mild, though firm tempers, the violence of the other party was repressed, and the vessel of the Constitution safely conducted into port, after having escaped a furious storm. As the rage of the High Church party, like the violent paroxysms of a fever, left that body relaxed and feeble, and reduced to a state of languor, from which it never recovered, the temperate heat and manly firmness which invigorated the measures of this party, have given it a tone of health that has not forsaken it to the present day.

With respect to Episcopal Government, they think that, taking the various directions given by St. Paul to Timothy and Titus, with the light thrown upon them by what we know of the constitution of the Jewish Church, and by the History of the Christian Church, in the times nearest to those of the Apostles, they have satisfactory evidence that Episcopacy is of Apostolical authority. They also think that, in a mixed government like ours, its different orders supply to the different ranks in society Ministers of religion, better classified and adapted to their various circumstances, than any other form of Ecclesiastical polity. They are also strongly attached to liturgical worship, in preference to extempore prayer, and particularly to their own admirable Liturgy, as giving a decided superiority to the services of the Church of England, to those of any other Episcopal Church. But they do not consider Episcopacy as necessary to the existence of a

Christian Church ; nor even a Liturgy as essential to public prayer ; though they contend for them both, as of superior excellence to any other mode of government or devotional service. They allow foreign Churches which are regulated by a discipline different from their own, the Established Church of Scotland, and Dissenters who have preserved the great doctrines of the Gospel, and the practical religion it teaches, to be composed of fellow Christians, and they wish to live with them in the habits of friendly intercourse, knowing that acrimonious disputes can never promote the interests of genuine Christianity. As the doctrines they embrace are favourable to civil, they are equally friendly to religious Liberty. They recognize the Rights of conscience as sacred, and inalienable, and believe that to God alone men are amenable for the exercise of them, so long as they are not destructive to good morals, to the peace of society, or to the reciprocal duties that man owes to man. In the two reigns subsequent to the Revolution, they had to struggle with the party opposed to them in the Church, for those maxims of toleration, which the tranquillity of the State, the security of the Church, and the most sacred rights of men, imperiously require. Their zeal in the same glorious cause has suffered no abatement, and, in our times has succeeded in rendering toleration complete to men of all religious sentiments. The comprehension of such Dissenters as could, by mutual conciliation, be brought into the Church, was long the favourite object of many of its most illustrious leaders, and though in this they failed of success, the attempt reflected honour upon their tempers, upon their principles, and upon their memory.

The doctrines of Arianism were transplanted from a more congenial soil into the Church, by Mr. Whiston, the

celebrated mathematician, in the reign of Queen Anne, and carefully watered by Dr. Samuel Clarke, who was certainly one of the finest classical scholars that this country has produced. Mr. Whiston had the honesty to leave the Church, the doctrines of which he had abandoned, and the religious sentiments of which were in perpetual collision with his own. Dr. Clarke persevered in hostility to the religious system of the Church, but had not the fortitude to be an honest dissenter. In the most solemn services of religion, he continued to address his Maker in language from which his heart revolted, and while he drew up a liturgy which exploded the proper Divinity of the Saviour, he continued in the use of one that ascribes to Him equal glory with the Father. This party claim Sir Isaac Newton, the philosopher of the universe, as an associate, in opposing the Divinity of the Saviour. Upon what evidence this claim rests, we know not; but the presumption, if sufficient evidence of the fact cannot be produced, must certainly be on the other side. He who unfolded all Nature's Laws must have seen lessons of infinite power and wisdom in the book of Creation, which are sealed from the eyes of common men. As, in the latter part of his life, he is said to have studied the Scriptures more than any other book, he could not but know that the creation, as well as the government of all the worlds in the universe, is often ascribed, in the word of God, to the Saviour. To suppose Newton to have seen nothing in the boundless tracts of space, in which ten thousand worlds roll, (and all in harmony,) but what created intelligence, and created power were adequate to produce, would be to degrade him indeed. He always professed the most cordial attachment to the doctrines and Liturgy of the Church of England, which no honest Arian

can possibly do. The glory which the Arian party wish to secure to themselves is at this expense, and a glory too which would attach real disgrace to their cause. For, if it would be an honour to have the co-operation of a man of Sir Isaac Newton's unequalled abilities, the consideration of his dishonesty and hypocrisy would more than counterbalance it. The want of integrity is the greatest dishonour that can affect either an individual or a party.—If any ministers of religion in the Church of England be of Arian sentiments, they generally conceal them, and their number it is to be hoped, is small. Arianism is not generally a resting place, and they who adopt sentiments so dishonourable to the Saviour of the world, generally go further.

The Socinians, who now take the name of Unitarians, have had a just claim to several Clergymen of the Church of England. But how those who believe Jesus Christ to have been nothing more than a good man, and consequently no more the object of religious adoration than any of his Apostles and followers, can, with clean hands and a pure heart, enter that temple which is dedicated to His worship, or join in that doxology which ascribes to Him and to the Holy Spirit, equal glory with the Father, and which addresses him as the King of Glory, and the Eternal Son of the Father, appears utterly unaccountable. The doctrine of the Trinity which pervades the whole Liturgy, Mr. Lindsey calls polytheism. And if the doctrine of the Trinity be inconsistent with the Divine Unity, the charge is well founded. Is it possible, that one who believes, that except for the purpose of working miracles, no Divine Influences have been shed, or can be expected to be shed, on the minds of men, can pray for the continual dew of God's Spirit with that persuasion and ex-

pectation which is necessary to their receiving the Heavenly rain? Can those who believe that the children of men have no other refuge than their own repentance and good works, feel that contrition and self-denial, which dictated the Evangelical piety of the Communion Service?—Several respectable writers—Jebb, Matty, Disney, Lindsey, Tyrwhitt, Wakefield, &c. feeling their sentiments decidedly hostile to the doctrines of the Church, acted in such a manner as every honest man will act. They bade her adieu, and separated themselves from her communion. Mr. Stone was lately driven from her altars, to the horns of which he would willingly have clung, that he might partake of her good things, at the time he was polluting them by perverting the faith of her sons. Two or three writers, who seem to have made some approaches to the doctrinal system of that gentleman, will, probably, learn a little more caution from the catastrophe of his adventures, and prefer the wages of unrighteousness, to the disinterested conduct of a Lindsey. A Socinian clergyman is equally condemned by the system that he openly professes, and by that which he secretly holds. If the first be well founded, he refuses in his heart that honour to the Son, which the Father commands to be given him, in common with himself; and if the last be the doctrine of the Gospel, he gives to a mere creature the worship which is due only to God, and in the solemn services of religion, uses the language of idolatry, from which his own conscience cannot but revolt. As, both of these systems require virtue and integrity in religion, as well as in every other transaction, both of them must reprobate their opposites.

Swedenborgians form another party in the Church. It was a fact very well known to the religious world, that

some individuals of the Clergy of the Church of England had embraced the tenets of Baron Swedenborg. The late Mr. Hartley, rector of Winwick, in Northamptonshire, presented himself before the public as the apologist of the Swedish seer, as he is styled by his followers. The Reverend J. Clowes, rector of St. John's, Manchester, has, in several performances, stood forth as the panegyrist and the strenuous defender of his system. Another Clergyman of the Church, whose name does not appear, but who wrote the Article, *Swedenborgians*, (in Mr. Adam's *Religious World Displayed*,) affirms that a numerous body of the Clergy, together with many individuals of their respective congregations, are receivers of the Baron's doctrines.—The doctrine of a Trinity of Persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost in the Unity of Godhead, is the primary Article of the Church to which all her Ministers subscribe, at their ordination, and there is not an order for prayer in the service of the Church, in which this doctrine is not recognized. The doctrine of Baron Swedenborg acknowledges but one Person as God, Jesus Christ; and denies the existence of the Father, and of the Holy Ghost, as Persons. He indeed taught that in the Person of Jesus Christ, dwells the whole Trinity of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, the Father constituting the soul of the humanity, whilst the humanity itself is the Son, and the Divine virtue or operation proceeding from it is the Holy Ghost; forming altogether one God; just as the soul, the body, and operation of man, form one man: This Rhapsody of nonsense, the reader may see in Mr. Adam's *Religious World*, Vol. III, p. 400.

The doctrine of a vicarious Atonement constitutes an essential part of Christianity, and is accurately stated in the second Article of the Church; and the belief of it per-

vades and inspires all her forms of devotion. Baron Swedenborg's doctrine teaches that the Redemption effected by our Saviour "consisted not in the vicarious sacrifice of one God, as some conceive, to satisfy the justice, or, as others express it, to appease the wrath of another God; but in the real subjugation of the powers of darkness, and their removal from man, by continual combats and victories over them, during his abode in the world; and in the consequent descent to man of Divine power and life, which were brought near to him, in the thus glorified humanity of this combating God."—P. p. 400, 401.

The doctrines of the Resurrection of the Body, and of the general Judgment, are fundamental articles of the Christian Religion; they are doctrines which the Church adopts in her Creeds, and to which, in her burial service, she has given distinguished prominence. Both these doctrines are exploded by Swedenborg, who teaches "that man immediately after his death rises again in a spiritual body, which was inclosed in his natural body, and that in this spiritual body he exists, either in heaven or in hell, according to the nature of his past life."

If a man may, consistently with ingenuity, embrace Articles of Faith, and subscribe to others which are at open war with them; if he may act as a minister of Religion, when the spirit and the language of the devotions at which he presides are at variance with his sentiments, why may not a Mohammedan Iman subscribe her Articles, and officiate as a Clergyman of the Church? The only reason why he may not, must be, that such men are generally too honest to commit so deliberate an act of wickedness. Of the Articles of the Church just mentioned, a Mohammedan disbelieves only the first two. He

fully believes in the doctrine of a general resurrection, and of a general judgment. The Swedenborgian denies them all. The anonymous gentleman formerly pointed to, was, it is to be hoped, too sanguine in calculating the numbers of those Clergymen in the Church, who have adopted the system of Baron Swedenborg. Whatever their numbers be, they certainly have it in their power to add much to their respectability (for an honest man is always entitled to respect), by leaving a body with which they can never cordially co-operate, but must always be in a state of counteraction. As to the Baron's visions of the eternal world, and his converse with its inhabitants, they are entitled at least to as much credit as Mohammed's account of his marvellous adventures in the seven heavens. The Arabian prophet, indeed, seems to have contrived his plans with a still more daring ambition, and to have executed them with a bolder flight. They who can receive the account of such prodigies, cannot justly be accused of wanting faith. But many who will not give their assent to the doctrines of Christianity, can give it to almost every thing besides.

We have now to turn our attention to a party in the Church, whose rapid increase, within these last thirty years, has awakened as many alarms in the minds of some for the safety of the Church, as it has excited, in the breasts of others, hopes of her future triumphs and glory. The voice of several of her Prelates has been heard, loudly calling her Ministers from the cold systems of morality, rising out of the mere philosophy of the world, to a lively faith in the Son of God, and to a morality grafted on the principles of the Gospel. Some Right Reverend members of the Episcopal bench, have, it must be allowed, probably from misinformation, expressed a

jealousy of the scope and aims of the Evangelical party. The wide diffusion of the doctrines they embrace, and the powerful influence they are supposed to have in forming the religious character of those who embrace them; the force with which they often operate in producing conviction on the minds of those whose attention is roused to examine them; the new direction they are observed to give to the actions of those who adopt them; have all contributed to bespeak for them a more than ordinary degree of attention. This party have been blamed for the assumption of the name Evangelical, as arrogating to themselves an exclusive title to be the only preachers of the Gospel. This objection they generally repel by denying the assumption, and saying that it is imposed upon, not assumed by them. So far as the name alone is concerned, the question is of no great importance. If there be really a distinction in the strain of these discourses, which the Clergy deliver from the pulpit, or issue from the press, men will be sure to mark it; and ingenuity will never be wanting to find a name for those sentiments which bear the stamp of peculiarity.

The unhappy disputes with respect to Ecclesiastical discipline and ceremonies, and with respect to the powers of Princes, and the privileges of Parliaments, which so mightily agitated the minds of men during the first two reigns of the Stuart family, and which divided the nation into the Court and Country parties, (the most distinguished Ministers of the hierarchy engaging in the maxims and political system of the Court, and the country party entering not only into all the religious scruples of the Puritans, but adopting also their principles of liberty,) unhappily dispose the disputants to recede as far as possible from each other. The doctrines of religion which they

held in common, before their tempers were inflamed by acrimonious controversy, were strictly Evangelical. The consequences of violent dissension, whether religious rites or politics be the subjects, are always found to be a disposition in the parties to remove as far as possible from each other; and when discordant ideas of both civil and Ecclesiastical polity combine their influence, the habits they form must be peculiarly repulsive. Many of the Puritans, when their minds became heated with controversy, diverged towards Antinomianism; and, in Cromwell's time, this doctrine seems to have ripened into fruit of the most deleterious kind. Nor were these animosities without their influence on the minds of Archbishop Laud and many other dignitaries of the Church. The bias of their sentiments took an opposite direction, and carried them with a strong current towards Semi-Calagianism. The system, indeed, was sheltered under the name of Arminias; but it was one to which Arminians was decidedly hostile. The consequences of the Fall, as they are forcibly represented in the Ninth Article, were forgotten, or overlooked. The necessity of Preventing Grace, which the Tenth Article so fully states, was treated as the illusion of fanaticism: and the doctrine of Justification by Faith alone, so strongly asserted in the Eleventh Article, was denounced as the doctrine of Antinomianism. Even the doctrine of the Atonement, though generally admitted, was seldom brought forth into that conspicuous view, or represented as occupying that distinguished place, which it holds in the Christian system. Even when the doctrine of General Redemption was taught, it was seldom traced to its only legitimate foundation, the *doctrine of universal depravity*. Nor were its bearings on the mode of Pardon and Acceptance that the Gospel

teaches, pursued to their proper consequences. Its influence in shedding abroad the love of God in the hearts of men, and in diffusing through all their faculties and principles, holy energies to form them to the love and to the practice of every good work, was not often illustrated with that precision and force of which the writings of the Apostles exhibit so striking an example. Much was done, and often with great power and beauty, to display the evidences that Christianity is true, but too little to show what Christianity, as the Gospel of Reconciliation, really was. The consequence was, that on the former subject, many were well instructed, who were extremely ignorant of the latter. Moral essays, formed on the cold and calculating principles of general expediency, often presented splendid images to attract the attention of those who frequented the Christian Temple, but which only cast a damp on the devotion the Liturgy had kindled: like those incrustations which, in northern regions, the palaces of ice exhibit, to dazzle with their brilliancy the eyes of the spectator, while by their touch they send the torpor to his heart. But though this revolution in the religious sentiments of the Church, had partially taken place before the commencement of the Civil war, and had advanced with rapidity during its progress, it was at the Restoration that it may be said to have been completed. When the waters of a rivulet are poisoned in its source, it can carry only death and disease wherever it flows. The court of Charles the Second was the fountain from which infidelity and profligacy of every kind were diffused; and these waters disembogued their pestilential streams through the nation. When the Church had to seek supplies of men who were to wear her mitres, and minister at her altars, from sources so corrupted, it is no

wonder that religion languished, and that morality itself became the subject of ridicule, when *the vilest men were exalted*. The Earl of Clarendon, a man of piety and virtue, though he did much good, and prevented much evil being done, was utterly unable to stem the torrent; and was at last, by its impetuosity, obliged to desert his post, and to take refuge in France. During the whole of this reign, the great doctrines by which Christianity is distinguished from natural religion, were thrown into the shade; and if the principles of Evangelical piety were at any time introduced into sermons, the distorted view in which they were generally exhibited, was both calculated and designed to throw them into ridicule.

But piety, though her influence was contracted, was not entirely extinguished. Dr. Barrow, with a penetrating eye and a feeling heart, could distinguish the sanctifying Influences of the Spirit, from the jargon of enthusiasm, and even when the Scriptural doctrine of Sanctification was generally exploded, was not ashamed to defend what he had learned in the school of Christ. Dr. South (with much alloy, proceeding from irritable passions and intemperate party zeal), enriched his sermons with much excellent divinity. Cudworth, the author of the *Intellectual System*, displays great strength of mind, and was master of a vast compass of learning, the stores of which have descended in his immortal work, to fertilize and to conduct through the labyrinths of science, the minds of men yet unborn. In point of Evangelical precision he was greatly inferior to the two former writers. The same thing may be said of Whitehooft. "He studied," says Bishop Burnet, "to raise those who conversed with him to a nobler set of thoughts, and to consider religion as a seed of a deiform nature (to use one of his own

phrases). In order to this, he set young students much on reading the ancient Philosophers, chiefly Plato, Tully, and Platin, and considering the Christian religion, as a doctrine sent from God, both to elevate and sweeten human nature, in which he was a great example, as well as a wise and kind instructor." The study of the most celebrated Philosophers is certainly highly important to young divines. It teaches the young idea how to shoot, and ramify. It gives keenness and perspicacity to the intellectual powers. It furnishes the mind with the habit of dividing and analyzing. It is one of the best means for forming a correct and elegant taste, and inspiring the art of composition. But for the acquisition of those principles which purify and elevate the mind, and which at once sweeten and sanctify human nature, the Christian student must be indebted to other sources. With respect to real sanctity, Plato, as well as his master, Socrates, left the world just as they found it. His philosophy instructed and amused many, but it purified none. It is from the Saviour's cross, and from the influence of his Spirit, that that healing virtue alone proceeds. The Apostles converted the world to Christianity, without employing a single quotation from any of those philosophers, and how useful soever they may be for subordinate purposes, if we seek to quench our thirst at these streams, we are forsaking the fountain of living waters and hewing out to ourselves broken cisterns that can hold no water. It was by mixing the principles of the Platonic Philosophy with the doctrines of the Gospel, that Christianity was first corrupted, and men led away, almost imperceptibly, from the simplicity that is in Christ, to the rudiments of this world. A man may know the disquisitions, and the vast genius and learning of Plato and

Cicero, without taking them as his guides to heaven. The choice of them for such a purpose, is the rejection of God himself, who has sent his word to conduct us thither. Perhaps no man, in modern times, has laid the writings of the heathen poets and philosophers under contribution more than Archbishop Leighton, a contemporary of Whitchoot, in his invaluable writings. But in his pages they never assume the office of guides to conduct, but follow humbly, as servants, the path of him who is travelling to the city of God.

There were among the Bishops of Charles's reign, some men of piety and deep erudition. In the number were Drs. Pearson and Fell, both of them well known in the religious and literary world. During the short reign of James, many of the Clergy distinguished themselves in the controversy which was then agitated with the Church of Rome. Stillingfleet, Tillotson, Patrick. &c. entered the lists, and with eminent success. In this, and in the former reign, infidelity and popery, those seemingly discordant, yet often found united foes, threatened the destruction of every thing that was sacred and venerable in the kingdom. To combat and repel their various attacks from the pulpit, was certainly a pious labour, and the necessity which this imposed has been thought the best apology for that want of prominence, of which Evangelical religion has to complain, in the discourses of those times. It is but fair to admit, that this apology is entitled to considerable attention ; but it deserves also to be well weighed, how much the filling up of the lines of Evangelical truth, with a bold and steady hand, might have contributed to defeat the object of the attack, while their tendency was to diffuse among Protestants the most salutary principles, the love of God and of the Saviour,

The efficacy of Christianity is intimately connected with its pureness, and the most formidable weapon that can be aimed at scepticism or popery, is *the sword of the Spirit*. It was by the simplicity of the Gospel, as *the power of God and the wisdom of God to salvation*, by the doctrine of a crucified Saviour, that its first preachers triumphed over the arts and arms, over the policy and the philosophy, over the wit and the eloquence of the world. Nor did infidelity ever succeed better, in her reprisals upon Christianity, than when she had disrobed her of her native beauty, to dress her in the garb, with the painting and the patches of a proud philosophy. The doctrine of human merit, an essential part of the system of popery, can never be attacked with such success, as when it is opposed by the doctrine of Justification by Grace, through Faith in the Redeemer's blood. The superstition and delatry which, like ivy, mantle and entwine themselves round the trunk of popery, powerfully feel the edge of the axe levelled at their root, when the offices of the Redeemer and Sanctifier of man are clearly exhibited, and the worship of the Father, through the Son, and by the Spirit, is inculcated as the only inspiring principle of Christian devotion.

The Revolution, by which the Constitution reverted to its first principles of Political Freedom, and held out its protecting hand to the rights of conscience, brought no radical cure for the wounds which the Church had suffered by abandoning her original doctrines. These doctrines continued, as they still continue, to possess all their authority, and none of her sons could engage in her service without subscribing to her Articles and Homilies; a tribute which is still rigorously exacted. But the great and animating truths of the Christian Redemption, though not entirely

overlooked, did not fill that large and distinguished place in the public eye, and in the public ministrations of religious instruction, which they occupy in the New Testament. In the views of Christianity they were generally thrown into the back ground.—It is surprising that so good a man as Bishop Burnet, in his Funeral Sermon of Archbishop Tillotson, should state and avow to the world that the numbers of the Establishment judged it to be the best way, “First to establish the principles of Natural Religion; and from that to advance to the proof of the Christian Religion, and of the Scriptures: not to enter much into the discussing of the mysteries of those sublime truths contained in the Scriptures, concerning God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and concerning the person of Christ: and to consider the whole Christian doctrine as a system of principles, all tending to the reforming men’s natures, and the governing their actions, the restraining their appetites and passions, the softening their tempers and sweetening their humours, the composing their affections, and the raising their minds above the interest and follies of this present world.” By this statement it appears that the Gospel was only partially, and by consequence, very imperfectly preached by the divines of the establishment, or at least by much the greater part of them. Whoever looks into the Acts of the Apostles, and examines the records of their preaching, or casts his eye on the Epistles they wrote, to the first Christian Churches will immediately perceive, that the Mediation of the Son of God, the Atonement he made for our sins upon the cross, his being set forth as a propitiation through Faith in his blood; Repentance toward God and Faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, are the grand subjects that employed their

ministrations. When they enforced the practice of generous communication of benefits to the wants and distresses of their fellow Christians, they enforced it from the philanthropy which is peculiar to the Gospel. "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich." When they enjoined that conciliating temper of mind which disposes the strong, liberally to sacrifice their own pleasure to the general interests of the Church, and even to the scruples of the weak, they did it by arguments which philosophy could neither furnish nor feel. "Even Christ pleased not himself." "Destroy not him with thy meat for whom Christ died." When they prescribed the relative duties of the Christian life, their arguments were Christian. They taught husbands to love their wives, "Even as Christ also loved the Church, and gave himself for her." Christian wives were induced to submit themselves unto their own husbands "as it is fit in the Lord;" children were instructed, "to obey their parents in the Lord." Fathers were required not to gall their children with a rigorous yoke, but to "bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." Servants were commanded to be obedient and faithful "as unto Christ, not with eye service, as men-pleasers, but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart." Masters were admonished of their duty to their servants, by the recollection that they also "had a master in Heaven with whom there is no respect of persons." In short, it was from the school of Christ that the Apostles brought all their arguments. Here all their weapons were forged; here they were whetted, and here were learned the rules of science by

which they wielded them. The arms formed on the anvils of philosophy may dazzle more, but they want that keen and penetrating edge, which the others possess; "For the word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." The armour of the schools may glitter on the parade, but it neither has the solidity that is necessary to repel wounds, nor the sharpness that, in a real combat, can pierce to the heart. When the Apostles managed the weapons of their Christian warfare, though they were not carnal, they were found to be mighty, through God, to the pulling down of strong holds. By those weapons, Christianity was established in the world, and her empire fixed, in the hearts of men. By this *whole armour of God*, her conquests were not only secured, but enlarged and amply extended, and the minds of her soldiers disciplined to the obedience of faith. But when her misguided troops exchanged her armoury for that of worldly science, her progress was arrested and her powers were broken. Their feeble darts only rung on the shields of her enemies, but could not pierce them, and fell (*telum imbellè sine ictu,*) bloodless to the ground. Like David in Saul's coat of mail, they were encumbered with the weight. Their most successful combats were in beating the air, which yielded to the stroke, and left no scar behind.

From Bishop Burnet's *History of His Own Times* it appears, that notwithstanding his laborious exertions, and those of Archbishop Tillotson, and several other excellent men, in endeavouring to re-invigorate the nerves of practical religion, they found her so relaxed

and unstrung, her spirits so wasted, and her strength so spent, that all their cordials could hardly keep her alive. Even the little success which they had may be instrumentally ascribed to the great doctrines of the Atonement, and the Influences of the Spirit, which they often preached, though without giving them that prominence with which they always appeared in the sermons of Cranmer, Jewel, and the other Fathers of the English Church. One cannot help sincerely wishing, that in their addresses from the pulpit, particularly to promiscuous congregations, they had, by exchanging their elaborate compositions, for the more simple, but more efficacious Homilies of their own Church, which flowed from her fountains, while yet pure and uncontaminated by the mixtures of waters turbid and foul, made the experiment what simple truth, unmingled with the wisdom of the world, could effect. The tone of their own practical piety was vigorous, far beyond what their defective system is generally seen to produce. As some men disgrace the purest and most exalted doctrines, by professing to believe that of which they feel not the power, so others rise far above their system, and happily escape, in a great measure, from the defects of it. Archbishop Tillotson was not only a prelate of the purest virtue, but of virtue so repulsive, that it disdained all compromise with the dissolute, though fashionable manners and diversions of a licentious age. In his judgment the theatres were nurseries of vice, and he was not afraid to denounce them to his countrymen, as the chapels of the devil. His own family was consecrated as the temple of God, and he was not ashamed to pronounce that those masters of families who offered up no morning and evening sacrifices, were not Christians. Of the same exemplary and correct kind,

were the practice and the sentiments of Bishop Burnet. But, in our times at least, the system they embraced is not generally found to exhibit followers of piety so elevated, of fruits so mellowed, and of sentiments so practically pure. The effects of the various systems of Divinity on their followers cannot be ascertained, by inspecting the lives of a few individuals, segregated from the general body: for as there are few so bad, as not to be able to produce some worthy characters attached to them; so there are none so good, as not to be disgraced by some unworthy retainers. It is from the combined influence that systems are observed to have upon the aggregate body, the tempers that they form, the spirit which they inspire, the manners they impress, the devotion they circulate, or the deadness they produce; the benevolence which expands, or the sordidness which contracts the hearts of their followers, in general; the prevalence of a converse with Heaven, or of a conversation formed on the maxims of the world;—that we are to collect the tendency of systems, as more or less favourable to the practical interests of Christianity.

The fact, that those truths by which Christianity is distinguished from Natural Religion had long been kept too much out of sight, by the greater part of the Ministers of the Church, though, so far as we have had an opportunity of observing, much more by the Clergy than the Bishops, is demonstrably evident from those pictures of human life, of the sentiments and the manners, of the opinions and the feelings by which mankind are discriminated, and which have been drawn and held up to the world by writers, whose opportunities for observation were the most favourable, and whose deep penetration rendered them well qualified to observe and to

paint from the originals. The class of writings to which we refer, is Novels. A masterly writer has illustrated this subject, in the general, with his usual eloquence and force, with a quotation from whom we shall adorn this work. "A careful perusal of the most celebrated of these pieces would furnish a strong confirmation of the apprehension, suggested from other considerations, concerning the very low state of Religion in this country, but they would still more strikingly illustrate the truth of the remark, that the grand peculiarities of Christianity are almost vanished from the view. In a sermon, although throughout the whole of it there may have been no traces of these peculiarities, either directly or indirectly, the preacher closes with an ordinary form; which, if one were to assert that they were absolutely omitted, would be immediately alleged in contradiction of the assertion, and may just serve to protect them from falling into entire oblivion. But in novels the writer is not so tied down. In these, people of religion, and Clergymen too, are placed in all possible situations, and the sentiments and language deemed suitable to the occasion are assigned to them. They are introduced instructing, reproofing, counselling, comforting. It is often the author's intention to represent them in a favourable point of view, and, accordingly, he makes them as well informed and as good Christians as he knows how. They are painted amiable, benevolent, and forgiving; but it is not too much to say, that if all the peculiarities of Christianity had never existed, or had been proved to be false, the circumstance would scarcely create the necessity of altering a single syllable in any of the most celebrated of these performances. It is striking to observe the difference which there is in this respect in similar works of Mohammedan authors,

wherein the characters, which they mean to represent in a favourable light, are drawn vastly more observant of the peculiarities of their religion."* In a note, he observes that Richardson's writings constitute the only exception to his observations.—Of all our writers of novels Fielding is generally allowed to have been one of the most discriminating in the characters he has drawn; to have known human nature in all her varying colours and evanescent shades; to have caught, with singular felicity, her fleeting robes; and to have given them to his reader with all the delicate tints of his pencil. His *Tom Jones* is well known to be the most distinguished of his productions. In that celebrated work, two Clergymen are brought upon the stage, and both of them are made to act such parts as determine their respective characters beyond the possibility of a doubt. The first that he introduces is Mr. Thwackum. He is represented as an excellent scholar, and in this one qualification all his excellencies are comprehended. He is a compound of pride, ill-nature, cruelty, injustice, covetousness, and ingratitude; and yet *with all these* he is represented as possessing a *most devout attachment to religion*. How a fellow so mean and base, could be devoutly attached to a religion so humble and so gentle as Christianity, of which disinterested benevolence, and a deep sensibility of favours conferred, are cardinal virtues, is a thing of no easy comprehension. He might, for any thing we know, have been a most devout Mohammedan, and the perfect image of his Prophet, with similar temper and dispositions, unsubdued and unbroken. But the disciple of the blessed

* Mr. Wilberforce's *Practical View*, &c. Chap. vi.

Jesus he never could be, till darkness and light, heaven and hell, the image of God and that of Satan, can be reconciled, and brought to meet in harmony. But we must not pass over, in silence, Thwackum's religious Creed. Of it, this is a leading article, that "The human mind, since the Fall, is nothing but a sink of iniquity, till purified and redeemed by grace." In short, this wretch is set up as the representative of the Evangelical Clergy, and from his temper, disposition, and doctrines, they are to be portrayed and exposed to the detestation of the world. The doctrine of Original Sin is, certainly, a fundamental Article of their Creed; but few of them would express it by so gross a metaphor. In Mr. Fielding's sense of the word virtue, it will, however, be allowed that there have been, and that there are, many virtuous and amiable persons, who never were sanctified by the grace of God, and who with respect to their fellow men, are even meritorious characters, and entitled to the respect and gratitude of society. The most splendid actions of such men, the Evangelical Clergy will, indeed, while they admit their claim to the gratitude of their fellow creatures, deny to have any value in the sight of God, because they are not done from the principles which alone his word approves. They will deny, that God ever can be pleased by accident, or with those actions which were never done with a design to please him. They will insist that the love of God is not a branch, but the root of morality; and that where that is not, though men may gather and be benefited by the fruits, as these were never offered to God, they cannot be acceptable to him. Mr. Thwackum is represented as highly offended by a position laid down by one of his pupils, "That there is no merit in Faith without works." It was an unfortunate thing that Mr. Fielding

should have introduced his fourteenth Book of the History of a Foundling, with an essay to prove that an author will write the better for having some knowledge of the subject on which he writes, without acting upon it in the present instance, and taking some pains to know, before he sat down to draw the portraiture of the Evangelical Clergy, what their sentiments really were. The ignorance he displays is so palpable, that on any other subject it would have exposed him to ridicule. Had he possessed the hundredth part of the knowledge of Christianity, that he had of the maxims of the world, he would have known that neither Faith *without* works, nor Faith *with* works, had any merit at all. As all men are sinners, they are by nature in a state of condemnation for their evil works, and as Bishop Sherlock well observes, it is absurd to inquire whether he who is already condemned for his evil works, can be justified by his good works. Even Faith, which is the principle of every good work, is the *gift* of God, and how that which is the gift of God can become the *merit* of man, even the abilities of Mr. Fielding were utterly inadequate to illustrate. Mr. Fielding knew human nature, in almost every other shape and shade which she assumes, but had never traced her to that form in which the Divine pencil has drawn her. He indeed insinuates, that Mr. Thwackum was a hypocrite, and such he most certainly was; but the men of the world are always ready to rank in this class, all whose faith or whose virtue rises above their own. That among the professors, and even among the Ministers of Evangelical Religion, such hypocrites have sometimes been found, is an undeniable fact. But what is the chaff to the wheat? Was it consistent with justice to represent the character of an individual, as the character of a species? Mr. Fielding has exposed

the rapacity and knavery of several gentlemen of the law; but he took care not to disgrace the profession, by introducing into his work some who were an ornament to it. Are the peculiar doctrines of Evangelical religion of such a kind as must necessarily contaminate the man who professes them? There were in Mr. Fielding's time, as there are now, Ministers of Evangelical religion, whose characters seldom or never were outshone, but by the Son of God while he dwelt with men upon the earth.

The other Clergyman is Mr. Supple, and the name well expresses his character. Besides the ridiculous and affected solemnity of his style, he is remarkable only for the patience with which he suffered his ears to be violated with the almost continual volleys of oaths and curses, discharged from the lips of a boisterous and brutal country Squire; at whose table he tamely heard such blasphemies, for the sake of pleasing his palate, and from the hope of obtaining a good living. From these honourable motives he submitted to the offices of an upper servant, without wearing the Squire's livery, and was sometimes sent on the most important business, to save the labours of a groom, or of a footman. "I have sent," said the Squire to Mr. Allworthy, when he invited that gentleman to dine with him at the Hercules' Pillars, in London, "Parson Supple down to Basingstoke, after my *tobacco-box*, which I left at an inn there, and I would not lose it for the world, for it is an old acquaintance of about twenty years standing." Now, that Mr. Supple may have had his archetype in some Clergyman of the Church of England, is possible, though one would hope that such characters are not easily to be found, in any religious party in her communion. But why are Thwackum and Supple exhibited as the portraits of the Clergy of the

Church of England? Are the Clergy composed only of hypocrites and spaniels? Mr. Thwackum's Creed is as well discriminated, as the author knew how to do it; but Mr. Supple's religious sentiments are so equivocal, and so little connexion has any thing that he either says or does, with the peculiar doctrines of Christianity, that if we did not know that the Christian Religion is established in England, we should be utterly at a loss to determine whether he were a priest of the Saviour of the world, of Mohammed, or of Juggernaut.

In another work, the History of Joseph Andrews, he has brought forward two other Clergymen to the observation of the world. In Parson Trulliber, he exposes to the derision and contempt of mankind, an arrant scoundrel, a hog-merchant, who during six days of the week follows the sty, and sinks himself in hoggism below the beasts he feeds, and tends, and takes to the market. On the Sabbath, he pollutes the pulpit and disgraces religion. Every day the savageness of his manners conspires with the vileness of his favourite employment, to desecrate his character, and to disgust human nature. Of the eighteen thousand Clergymen which the Church is supposed to have in holy orders, we trust eighteen Trullibers cannot be found. It seems to have been Mr. Fielding's deliberate purpose to villify an order of men, invested with a public character; from the purity, or from the contamination of whose principles, lives, and manners, the most salutary, or the most pernicious consequences are sure to result to the community at large.

There yet remains a fourth clerical character, which he has delineated in the last mentioned work, under the name of Mr. Abraham Adams. He is represented as possessed of a large stock of classical learning; of an inexhaustible

fund of good nature; of feelings, and sentiments, the most benevolent and generous; and of a heart that melts at every scene and tale of woe. All these qualifications are both necessary and ornamental to a Minister of Christianity. Simplicity, the prominence of which is necessary to consecrate the man of God, and the Minister of religion; but it is the simplicity of purity, not the simplicity of folly. Mr. Adams's simplicity is that of ignorance of the world.

His eyes were often fixed on the classical, or on the historic page, but the volume of human nature he had never opened. He wanted either the penetration that was necessary to qualify him to discriminate, or the attention to what was passing around him and before him, that was necessary to employ that faculty with success. He was nearly as little acquainted with the manners and ways of men, as Mr. Fielding was with the peculiar doctrines of Christianity. From this very defect arose a considerable incompetency for dividing the word of truth, had he even drunk deep into the doctrines of the Gospel. One particular feature of his character is entitled to high respect. Considering himself as the legate of the skies, he would neither bend to the smiles nor the threats of the great, when they were employed to seduce him from his duty; but regardless of consequences, resolutely pursued the path of true honour. But this philanthropic Divine, whom Mr. Fielding unquestionably meant to exhibit as a Minister of the Church of England, as sound and orthodox as he knew how to make him, in all his discourses on the subject of religion, discovers a total ignorance of its fundamental truths, and of their importance and influence in forming the principles and lives of men. He considered Christianity as a republication of the religion

of nature, a second edition of that noble work, with enlargements and improvements, and with motives amplified and extended. Of the universal state of men as sinners; of the condemnation to which rebellion against the moral government of God exposes them; of the necessity of a Mediator between them and God; and of the necessity of God's Holy Spirit to restore them to the Divine image, he either had formed no idea, or he teaches those whom he addresses to form none. The figure of the cross, his office laid him under the necessity of often making; but the doctrine of the cross, and the salvation of a guilty world through his Atonement who died upon it, formed no part of the topics from whence he drew his arguments and motives of action. The Ministry of reconciliation, either as it respects the restoration of man to the favour, or to the image of God, holds no place in his system. With respect to the last, the great promise of the Gospel, the Spirit of God to purify and sanctify the hearts of men, he falls below even Semi-Pelagianism itself. The followers of that system admit the existence, and even the operations of a heavenly Power, though they confine his energies to the assistance, and do not extend them to the formation of our good dispositions. But Mr. Adams does not appear to have known, that the promise of the Holy Ghost has any respect to our times; though he must at his ordination have declared his trust, that he was moved by the Spirit to undertake the sacred office of the ministry. It may perhaps be said that as no sermons of that divine are given in the work to which we refer, it was unnecessary in a profile to fill up the whole lines of the Church doctrine, which is the business of a more didactic composition. To this we must reply, that Mr. Adams, representing a Christian divine, ought to refer to,

those principles, and to proceed upon them in the instructions he communicates, which are peculiar to the religion whose Minister he claims to be. Were a Mohammedan Iman to occupy a similar place in a work of fancy, written by a Mohammedan, as Mr. Wilberforce observes, we would certainly see those doctrines brought forward which distinguish Mohammedanism from all other religions.

Mr. Adams^t shows himself so completely ignorant of the Articles of his own Church, as to maintain the doctrine of Justification by Works, in opposition to her own decisive declaration, in the eleventh Article; which he is supposed to have subscribed. "When he (Mr. Whitfield) began to call nonsense and enthusiasm to his aid, and set up the detestable doctrine of faith against good works, I was his friend no longer: for surely that doctrine was coined in hell, and one would think none but the Devil himself could have the confidence to preach it. For, can any thing be more derogatory to the honour of God, than for men to imagine that the All-wise Being would hereafter say to the good and virtuous, 'Notwithstanding the purity of thy life; notwithstanding that constant rule of virtue and goodness in which thou walkedst upon earth, still as thou didst not believe every thing in the true orthodox manner, thy want of faith shall condemn thee?' Or, on the other side, can any doctrine have a more pernicious influence on society than a persuasion, that it will be a good plea for the villain at the last day;—'Lord, it is true I never obeyed thy commandments, yet punish me not for I believed them all?'"*

* Book 1, Chap. 17.

The doctrine of Faith opposed to Works is, indeed, as Mr. Adams justly pronounces it to be, a detestable one, but it is one which, we suppose, Mr. Whitfield never taught. Genuine Faith contains in it the latent germ from which all good works necessarily spring. It is the root from whence the sap flows and circulates, through every branch, to clothe the tree with blossoms, and to ripen these blossoms into good fruit. To oppose Faith to Works is therefore as absurd as to oppose the suckers of a tree to the fruit it yields. Justification by Faith, and Justification by Works, are indeed opposite doctrines; for though Faith is a vital principle of holiness, it is not in this point of view that it justifies; but as it apprehends and puts on the Saviour. The Faith which receives the Propitiation set forth in the Gospel, being also the seed of all holy desires, good dispositions, and good works, constitutes an inseparable connexion between Justification and Sanctification, and it is only by the possession of the latter, that our title to the blessings of the former can be vindicated. Mr. Adams seems not to have known, that according to our Saviour's statement, in his intercessory prayer for the whole Church, the *Truth* is the great means of our Sanctification; and that according to his Apostles' declaration, the hearts of men are purified by Faith in the Truth, and that therefore Mr. Adams teaches a Sanctification unknown to the Scriptures. The plea which he puts in the mouth of a villain, is certainly an unanswerable argument against Antinomianism; but as Evangelical religion uniformly teaches the inseparable union of Faith with Holiness, and acknowledges no Faith to be genuine, which does not produce good works, Mr. Adams's objection cannot be brought to bear upon that subject.

Mr. Adams's exhortation to his friend in affliction, which Mr. Fielding represents as "calculated for the instruction and improvement of the Reader," sufficiently shows that the sentiments of this divine are subversive of all Christianity. "You are a man, and consequently a sinner, and this may be a punishment to you for your sins: indeed in this sense it may be esteemed as a good, yea, as a great good, which satisfies the anger of Heaven and averts that wrath which cannot continue without our destruction."* How the temporal sufferings of any human being can satisfy the anger of Heaven, and avert its wrath, is, upon the principles of the Christian Redemption, utterly inexplicable. The doctrine of the Church is, that Christ "made upon the Cross (by his one oblation of himself once offered) a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction, for the sins of the whole world." If any man can make an atonement for his sins, the same thing must be equally in the power of all men; and, upon these principles, the Atonement of Christ instead of constituting the most glorious display of the manifold wisdom, grace, and love of God, is rendered entirely useless and unnecessary. It is no wonder, when those who are unjustly called the Ministers of Christianity use such language, that the ignorant are hardened in their prejudices, being systematically taught to reject the salvation of the Gospel. Upon an occasion of recent date it was stated in the news-papers, that a poor ignorant malefactor convicted of a capital crime, begged the intercession of the Judge for his life, expressing his hope that by the goodness of his future conduct, he might be able to atone for

* Book III, Chapter 11.

his past sins!—Speaking of Mr. Adams, Mr. Fielding says, “His virtues and his other qualifications, as they rendered him equal to his office, so they made him an agreeable and valuable companion, and had so much endeared and so well recommended him to a Bishop, that at the age of fifty he was provided with a handsome income of twenty three pounds a year; which, however, he could not make any great figure with, because he lived in a dear country, and was a little encumbered with a wife and six children.” Unquestionably, every feeling mind would rejoice to see a man possessed of so much classical knowledge and taste, and of so many amiable accomplishments, provided with a much better income; but, surely, no blame could attach to any Bishop for not promoting a curate of Socinian principles, whose doctrinal system is at open war with the Articles, Liturgy, and Homilies, of the Church of England. The Bishop who would ordain such a man, would indeed be a traitor to the Church.

There is another Clergyman who enters the stage, in the same work, and though he does and says little, that little is not much to his honour. The only thing in which he excelled was, the *making of punch*, except that, perhaps, his abilities in drinking, were not inferior to his skill in preparing it.—Such, according to Mr. Fielding, are the Clergymen of the Church. The most enraged sectary with all the virulence that party spirit can supply, could hardly furnish invective so severe, or so unjust.

Mr. Fielding, in his *History of a Foundling*, exhibits drawn at full length, the picture of what he considered as an accomplished Christian, under the character and name of Mr. Allworthy, and several lineaments of that noble portrait he has seized with great success and exe-

outed with the boldness, and at the same time with the delicate touches of the pencil, of a master. But he was able only to fill up those lines of character which a Christian possesses in common with a virtuous Mohammedan, or with an amiable Pagan. The great principles of discrimination, that exalt a Christian to virtue purer and more sublime, than any other religion is able to inspire, he has almost entirely left out. Mr. Allworthy is introduced enforcing the sanctions of Christianity, inculcating its morals, and embellishing them by his own virtues. He is the friend of the friendless, he binds up the wounds of the widow and orphan, after he has poured into them wine and oil. His heart is taught to feel for the distresses of human life. His bounty, though the hand that dispenses it is unseen; yet, like showers that fall behind the veil of night, diffuses freshness and verdure wherever it falls. His house is open to the virtuous, but unfortunate, against whom every other door is shut. All these are lineaments of the Christian character, and will, when a Christian moves in a sphere that allows scope to their exercise, shine with a soft and steady lustre. But, in Mr. Allworthy, these amiable dispositions had derived nothing from the love of God in the Redemption of a guilty world; nothing from the love of the Son of God in laying down his life for us, when we were his enemies; nothing from the grace of God's Spirit, by whose influence the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts. Had all these doctrines been fables, Mr. Allworthy could not have treated them with greater neglect than he has done. He is represented to us, in the glow of health, and we see him laid on the bed of affliction, expecting the approach of the last foe; but from his lips, not a single expression escapes by which he appears to feel that he is a sinner,

and stands in need of the Divine mercy. He expresses no belief in the doctrine of the Atonement; no Faith in the Redeemer, through whose blood alone we have boldness and confidence to enter into the most holy place. He feels no need of an Intercessor with the Father, but wrapped up in his own merits, he lies prepared, as he supposes, to appear before the throne of God, and to claim eternal life as the prize of his own virtue.—Of characters of this kind the virtues are either merely fictitious, and therefore easily supplied by an ingenious writer; or hollow, and such as rest upon no principles that Christianity teaches; while the defects are essential, and the exhibition of them is attended with effects of the most mischievous kind. From the death-bed of a real Christian, distinguished as much by the fervour of his piety, and the depth of his Biblical researches, as by the extent of his genius, the profundity of his general learning, the solidity of his judgment, and the possession of every virtue both active and passive, let us learn how it becomes a sinner, and a saint to die. “I have lived to see this world is made up of perturbations, and I have been long preparing to leave it, and gathering comfort for the dreadful hour of making my account with God, which I now apprehend to be near: And though I have, by his Grace, loved him in my youth, and feared him in mine age, and laboured to have a conscience void of offence to him, and to all men; yet if thou, O Lord, be extreme to mark what I have done amiss, who can abide it? And therefore where I have failed, Lord show mercy to me; for I plead not my righteousness, but the forgiveness of my unrighteousness, for his merits who died to purchase a pardon for penitent

sinner."* The life of John Thornton, Esq. and of his son, Henry Thornton, Esq. (for this venerable man now sleeps with his Father,) far exceeded in real, the fictitious virtues ascribed to Mr. Allworthy; and yet, like Hooker, they were dead to their own virtue, and took up their rest wholly in the cross of Christ.

Dr. Goldsmith has appropriated a small volume to the consecration of distinguished piety and virtue, in Dr. Primrose, the Vicar of Wakefield. To give us a full view of that divine, he is represented in circumstances the most diversified; he is represented in ease and plenty, in poverty and meanness, in wretchedness and want, in sickness and in prison; as overwhelmed with a series of disasters bursting at once upon his family, and threatening to overwhelm them in irretrievable ruin; and, finally as emerging from this sea of troubles, to adorn a state of prosperity more elevated than that from which he had fallen. We are introduced into his most private retirements; we hear him reason, and with much feeling and force, on the various changes in which he had acted or suffered. We hear him administer to his own family, and to others, the consolations of religion, so far as he knew and felt them. We listen to his reproofs, which are keen, yet tempered with philanthropy; to his instructions, which display no ordinary talent for ratiocination; to his exhortations, that embrace every topic a Moral Philosophy can supply. In his address to the prisoners, men who had been long disciplined to crimes, we have a strong and pathetic expostulation, connecting their present misery with their wickedness; and setting before them

* Life of Mr. Richard Hooker, prefixed to his Works.

the more awful consequences of transgression in the world to come. But in all this exuberance of argument, in all the varieties of motive to persuade and influence, not a single particle is brought from the doctrines that distinguish Christianity from natural religion, or even from Mohammedanism. Those mighty weapons which in the hands of the Apostles, penetrated, by the Grace of God, into the inmost recesses of the mind, and shook the strong-holds of sin, by the awful spectacle exhibited on the cross,—the Son of God dying for sins not his own,—the pardon purchased and sealed by blood divine,—that message of love which conquers and constrains,—which at once melts the soul, and invigorates it to new obedience,—Dr. Primrose's arms had never learned to wield. He and Mr. Adams had learned their divinity in the same school; but neither of them had imbibed the doctrines which are the power of God and the wisdom of God to salvation.—Dr. Primrose had a staff, which had been given by bishop Jewel to Mr. Hooker, and on which he set great value. It seems never to have occurred to the Doctor, that the Scriptural system of divinity, that stands prominent in the writings of that great and good man, would have been infinitely more valuable.

It were easy to show, from many other works of the same kind, by writers of distinguished abilities and talents, how utterly incompetent they have almost universally been found, to give to the world the likeness, either of a Christian or of a Minister of Christianity. But what a Fielding, a Goldsmith, and a Smollett, and many other such writers were not able to furnish, Mrs. More has correctly and elegantly finished, in the character of Dr. Barlow, in "*Cœlebs in Search of a Wife.*" How shall we account for the fact, that men who have succeeded in

painting to the life every other character, should totally fail in delineating those two characters which are the most excellent, and the most important of all to be known? shall we pronounce them unable to copy? or shall we say that their exhibitions are only copies, taken from other imperfect copies, and not from the great archetype? It is evident that the writers had never scanned the book of God with an exploring eye, and that they had seldom seen those truths which are the life of the world, exhibited with that prominence which was necessary to arrest and fix their attention. But it would be utterly unjust to represent this great and awful defect, as peculiar to the Ministers of the Church of England. They may with justice say, that whatever defects were chargeable upon the discourses of her sons, the Liturgy of their venerable Mother presented to her worshippers the faithful picture of every Christian doctrine, grace, and virtue. The Church of Scotland has suffered the same declination from the meridian of sound doctrine; and the heat and life of devotion, as is always the case, have declined in exact proportion. The same dereliction of the great doctrines of the Reformation, has taken place among the Protestants on the Continent, and has been attended with the same unhappy effects on the state of practical religion. The Presbyterian Dissenters, soon after the accession of the Brunswick Family, slid gradually into the same vapid system of Divinity with the Church; and sunk even deeper in the mire of Pelagianism and an Anti-evangelical creed. The resuscitation of scriptural doctrine, which has given new life and vigour to the Church, has hardly shaken the dry bones, that in this society lie scattered around the grave. In the dreary regions of the frigid zone of Arianism and Socinianism, they have wandered,

and they still continue to wander, where no sun glides or warms the prospect, wild and waste. The Independents in general preserved uncontaminated the doctrines of the Reformation, though they so far sympathized with the general coldness and torpor in religion, that they displayed little of the animated tone of devotion. They had indeed a Dr. Watts, and a Dr. Doddridge, men who were burning as well as shining lights. The former observes, "It must be acknowledged, indeed, to the honour of the present age, that we have some pretences above our predecessors, to freedom and justness of thought, to strength of reasoning, to clear ideas, and to the generous principles of Christian charity; and I wish we had the practice too: but as to the savour of piety, and inward religion, as to spiritual-mindedness, and zeal for God, and the good of souls; and as to the spirit and power of evangelical ministrations, we may all complain, *the glory is much departed from our Israel.*"*

The revival of Religion among the Independent and Baptist Dissenters was nearly simultaneous with the reviviscency of it in the Church. As in both it had languished, in both it began to recover its vigour nearly about the same time, and in both with a progressive energy it continues to grow. Thus these bodies, the Church and Dissenters, though in a state of mutual repulsion, continue to act upon each other with a sort of electrical power, which either benumbs or animates.—It was, however, through the instrumentality of her own ministers, that the doctrines of the Reformation were rescued from the oblivion into which they had fallen.

* Dedication of his Sermons.

The great truths of Christianity being brought into general notice, the appeal being made to the Scriptures, to the Articles, and to the Homilies of the Church, a trail of light burst upon the eyes of men. The sparks of this fire were first kindled in the Church, and were soon communicated to the Dissenters.

Of all the writers in the Church, subsequent to the Restoration, none laboured with more unwearied perseverance, to bring back the doctrines taught by the Ministers of the Church to its original purity, than Bishop Beveridge. In his Exposition of the Thirty Nine Articles, in his *Thesaurus Theologicus*, in his Sermons, &c. he exerted himself to restore Evangelical Religion to the more vigorous tone of better times; nor were his efforts altogether ineffectual. He resolutely stemmed the general current, and though he could not turn the tide, like a mighty rock, he, unshaken, resisted its impetuosity; and, by breaking its force, assisted others in escaping from its overwhelming current. To no name in the history of the confessors who followed him, does the Church owe the respectful tribute of gratitude, more than to the memory of Dr. Beveridge, for the possession of that healthful doctrine with which she is now blessed. In several respects he is entitled to the praise of more sobriety, than some other good and pious men, while he possessed equal fervor; of more discrimination, with equal soundness in the faith; of more learning, with equal simplicity; and of an equal zeal for the great doctrines of the Gospel, with a total exemption from their eccentricity. If, in later times, the success of others were more complete, yet to none of the competitors in the same honourable course, is the gratitude of the present age more justly due, than to that excellent man. It is not al-

ways for the greatest champions, that the meed of triumph is reserved. The colossal mind of Mr. Pitt, laboured with all its powerful energies, to rescue Europe from the beak and talons of that foul and ravenous harpy, Buonaparte; and in this struggle he fell the martyr of his own exertions, of his country, and of civil society. To him that was denied, which Providence has granted to the persevering efforts of the wisdom and vigour of our present Ministry, great indeed, but certainly inferior to the resources of his wonderful genius. When the machine of government, or of religion, receives the impulse of that Almighty hand that gave to our globe its centripetal and centrifugal force, it flies to the goal with a velocity that mocks the best, but the unblest operations of man.

For the two Weeseys, John and Charles, and for Mr. Whitfield, (all of them Ministers of the Church when they began their career, and the first two continued in her communion to the end of their lives), Providence had laid up in store the happiness of successfully recalling many of the members of the Church to the important truths of Christianity, that had suffered an eclipse by the supposed improvements of modern divinity. Their discourses indeed smelled less of the lamp, than the lucubrations of many of their superiors and equals in the Church, though all of them were men of respectable talents, and considerably imbued with literature. But bringing their stores of divinity fresh from the reservoir of the Scriptures, their sermons had a power and unction unknown to every system of philosophy. Appealing to the authentic documents of the Church, for the soundness of the doctrines they taught, as well as to the writings of the most eminent English Reformers, the closer the appeal was fol-

lowed up by an application to those sources of information, with the greater force conviction was brought home to the minds of men, that their zeal for the essential doctrines of Christianity was *without innovation*. They were all men of strict and eminent piety, of morals correct and pure, and removed even beyond the breath of suspicion. They were exalted far above the sordid love of money, and the love of criminal pleasure. Besides supplying to themselves the bare necessities of civilized life, they knew no other use of money, than that of feeding the hungry, and clothing the naked; the only luxury in which they indulged themselves. To them the honours of the world had no charms, and even ecclesiastical dignities no attracting power. Knowing them to have been men of like passions with ourselves, we may reasonably suppose, that they did not always escape the contagious influence of self-congratulation, vanity, and spiritual pride, exhaled from the incense of sincere, perhaps, but injudicious applause, blown upon them by their followers. It is not often, however, in the history of mankind, that we shall find men of greater virtues and fewer infirmities. The great subjects that filled up their public discourses were, the Fall of Man, and the necessary consequence of it, Human Depravity; the Restoration of our corrupted nature to the image of God, by the Regeneration of his Holy Spirit; the Atonement made by our Saviour on the cross for our offences, and Justification by Faith in his blood. The controversy about the Divine Decrees, which has so long agitated the Christian world, and divided it into parties, soon disturbed their harmony, and they separated from each other; but without that estrangement of affection, which too often attends religious disputes. The two Messrs. Wesleys adopted the Arminian, and Mr.

Whitfield and his adherents the Calvinistic side of the question.

However ready the Evangelical Clergy are to do justice to the memory of those excellent men, to whom their country owes so much, the applause they bestow is neither indiscriminate, nor without its deductions. The principal actors in the subsequent scenes were Mr. John Wesley, and Mr. Whitfield. In both their Journals, it has been observed by many of the Evangelical Clergy, that there are many crudities, and many vestiges of enthusiasm. They present also, occasionally, some traces of resentment, displayed by ironical and satirical reflections, against their opposers, which cannot be reconciled with the meekness and gentleness of Christ. There is one particular instance of this kind in Mr. Wesley's Journal, upon which Bishop Warburton, in his "Doctrine of Grace," has severely and justly animadverted, as well as on several other offensive parts of that work; but too often with such a spirit of virulence, that Mr. Wesley may be said to have been a man, in this respect, more sinned against, than sinning. Bishop Gibson, in one of his pastoral letters, has collected from Mr. Whitfield's Journal, many highly exceptionable passages, and reprobated them with justice, though not without Christian meekness. Mr. Whitfield's invectives against the Clergy, were utterly inexcusable. His abuse of Archbishop Tillotson was gross and shameful. Had he, in sober language, exposed the defects of that Prelate's sermons, he had done no more than what was just; but in representing him as little better than a Mohammedan, he violated every principle of justice, as well as of charity. It must not, however, be omitted, that Mr. Whitfield made all the atonement to the world, that he was capable of

making, by confessing his enthusiasm, and retracting his censures, with all the marks of a deep humility and sincere repentance. This circumstance is none of the least singular in that extraordinary character, and it should disarm the hand that is lifted up to wound his memory, now that he is in a better world. Nor was this recantation made on his death-bed, but before the scene of his useful labours was closed, though after the effervescence of those passions, which mingled with the first ebullitions of his Christian zeal, had evaporated. The Evangelical Clergy generally allow, that with much that was excellent, there were considerable mixtures of heterogeneous qualities, in the public ministrations and systems of both; that the tumultuous passions were too much and too frequently roused; and that the possession of grace was sometimes inferred, rather from the strength, than from the subjugation of turbulent feelings. They also highly blame the inconsistency of both, in claiming to be the members of a Church, the discipline of which, by their irregularity, they continued to violate.

Mr. Hervey, Wm. Walker of Truro, Mr. Adam, Mr. Grimshaw, Mr. Flechier, and Mr. Peronett, were all men of fervent piety and exemplary lives; all of them were possessed of talents above, rather than below, mediocrity; and some of them were distinguished by great talents highly cultivated. By the energy of their pulpit exertions, and some of them by their writings, they contributed greatly to the diffusion of genuine Christianity. A goodly number of other Divines arose in the Church, who shone with a steady and increasing light, all of whom it would be impossible to particularize.

Many of the Bishops of the Church have taken a decisive part in inculcating the doctrines of Evangelical Re-

ligion. Bishop Sherlock, in his elegant and masterly discourses, has illustrated the great doctrines of the Gospel, with a force of manly reasoning to which few works in our language, or indeed in any other, can be found equal. Archbishop Secker, a prelate of distinguished piety, abilities, and virtue, laboured successfully in the same cause, and summoned his Clergy to co-operate with him in disseminating the peculiar doctrines of Christianity. That elegant scholar and writer, Bishop Lowth, by his beautiful translation of Isaiah, the Evangelical Prophet, contributed to give to Evangelical sentiments a decided prominence. The pious and venerable Bishop Wilson, threw the weight of his devotion and learning into the same scale. His works contain a treasure of practical religion, rising upon Christian principles, and enforced more by their simplicity, than they could have been by the embellishments of more finished composition. Bishop Horne trod the same path and consecrated his distinguished talents to illustrate and enforce the doctrines of the cross. The elegant and excellent Bishop Porteus employed all the graces of eloquence, as well as the ornaments of the milder virtues, to adorn the Gospel of his Saviour. Bishop Horsley brought the vast stores of his learning, and the Herculean strength of his mind, to support the essential doctrines of the Gospel, when they were attacked by the Champion of Socinianism, Dr. Priestley. From his tempestuous hand, the javelin flew, and with thundering vengeance stretched in the dust, the hapless warrior (as the blustering Hector was felled by the stone of Ajax) his sophistry deserting his slackened hand,

"His load of armour, sinking to the ground,
Clank'd on the field, a dead and hollow sound."

It were easy to bring forward many other great names among the Bishops of the Church, who have been distinguished as much by their piety as by their learning. We do not mean to contend, that every one of those respectable prelates whom we have mentioned was, in every article of what we have stated to be the doctrines of evangelical religion, perfectly evangelical; though we believe the greater part of them were so. On the doctrine of Justification by faith alone, the sentiments of some of them were perhaps not sufficiently decisive. But in all of them, there is such a pointed reference to the doctrine of Reconciliation by the Cross, to the Mediation and offices of Christ, and to the Influences of the Holy Spirit, as it will be difficult to find examples of, in the writings of those prelates, who wrote after the times of Bishop Beveridge, till the eminent revival of religion, which began with Whitfield and Wesley. Some writers also, whose sentiments have, in various instances, been anti-evangelical, have contributed to the spread of Evangelical doctrines, by their forcible statements of some particular truths, intimately connected with that system. We have already seen how Bishop Warburton, in his *Divine Legation*, establishes the doctrine of Justification by Faith alone. In his "*Doctrine of Grace*," he shows, in the *outlines* of his work at least, the same solidity of judgment, united with a mind susceptible of the richest combinations of general and scriptural learning. Speaking of the forfeit of the Fall, and of our corrupted nature, he observes, "An Atonement, therefore, for the offended Majesty of the Father was first to be procured, and this was the work of the Son; and then a remedy was to be provided for that helpless condition of man, which hindered the Atonement from producing its effect, and

this was the office of the Holy Ghost : so that both were joint-workers in the great business of reconciling God to man.* He then observes, that the office of the Holy Spirit is to establish our Faith and to perfect our obedience, "and this he doth by *enlightening the understanding*, and by *rectifying the will*." No man could more justly, or more forcibly, state the great plan of Redemption. But alas ! he soon leaves this foundation to raise a superstructure upon another.

Dr. Young is a writer of a very different kind. In his Night Thoughts, he has compressed the great doctrines of Christianity into his poem, and, by this means, given poetry a dignity to which otherwise it could not have risen. It thus becomes the vehicle not only of strong and sublime feelings and sentiments, but also the instructor of the ignorant, the comforter of such as mourn, the purifier and refiner of the passions, and the powerful ally of the Christian Ministry. Few works, in our language, have displayed a happier union of piety and genius, powers more expansive, an imagination more bold and soaring, ratiocinative faculties more vigorous, or a humility of mind more disposed to stoop and to adore the wisdom and love of God in the mystery of Redemption. Dr. Young, therefore, occupies a distinguished place among those writers who have adorned and disseminated the doctrines of the Gospel.

Mr. Newton, the history of whose eventful life is recorded by Mr. Cecil, as well as by himself, stands high in the religious world, as a faithful expositor of that experimental piety, of which he himself was so bright an ex-

* Doctrine of Grace, p. p. 2, 3.

ample. In him, religion shone with an attractive simplicity, and godly sincerity; and when he drew her character in the pulpit, he exhibited his own likeness in the different walks of life. His writings have few adventitious ornaments. They generally please the serious mind, because they are the mirror of truth. They have had extensive circulation in the Church, and though many pious men may wish that the peculiarities of Calvinism had been less apparent in them, it will be generally allowed that they have had very considerable influence in their circle, to invigorate the tone of practical religion, and to display the genuine principles of Christianity.

Mr. Milner, of Hull, by his sermons, and especially by his Church History, has done much to extend the knowledge of those doctrines, by which the Christian Religion is distinguished from every other. His writings display an active and vigorous mind, awake to the high and important ends of the Christian Ministry. Able to enter the lists with the most hardy of the sons of scepticism, he successfully repels their unhallowed weapons from the Christian Temple, and while he ministers at the Altar, knows how to defend it. In Ecclesiastical History he has marked out a path untrodden before him. By removing the rubbish with which other Ecclesiastical historians had blocked up the way, he conducts his reader, from the stormy regions of conflicting passions and interests which swell the surrounding scene, to the quiet habitations of the just, where is heard the voice of joy and melody. While other historians display only, or mostly, the mould that covers the surface, he explores the mine, deep and rich, and from thence strews the ground with ingots of the precious ore, dug from its bowels. The labours he left unfinished, his brother, the Dean of Carlisle, has under-

taken ; and, in his hands, there is no fear that the workmanship will be unworthy of the materials.

Cowper, the Poet, in whom the rare assemblage of every grace that softens, and every virtue that adorns, the Christian ; of every energy that elevates the poet, and of every accomplishment that embellishes the man of learning, were found united, has consecrated his heaven-strung lyre, to celebrate, in strains rapturous as those of the Seraphim, the wonders of Redemption. The fire of this poet of Christianity, kindled at her altars, and rekindling them, lights up the kindred flame in every breast that is taught to glow with the genial heat of pure Religion. Callous indeed that bosom must be, on which the tender warblings of his love to God and to men can descend, without awakening some corresponding feelings. As the dignity of Milton's mighty Muse, in *Paradise Lost*, gave to his truly Evangelical sentiments a currency, which even those who had embraced an opposite Creed seldom ventured to dispute, the charm of goodness that makes the reader lose the poet in the man, and the author in the Christian, in the page of Cowper, has made him a distinguished and successful advocate of vital Christianity.

Mr. Scott, by the persevering efforts of a life dedicated to the service of his Redeemer, has made the truths of Christianity to circulate by various channels. By his *Essays*, his *Sermons*, his *Refutation of Paine*, and by his *Commentary on the Bible*, he has established his character, as a scribe well instructed in the mysteries of Heaven. In his *Remarks on the Bishop of Lincoln's Refutation of Calvinism*, he exhibits a zeal that is tempered with charity and candour ; a love of truth consistent with the respect that is due to his Diocesan ; and the pious mind, that cannot adopt all his deductions, must yet rise from the perusal

of them, with sentiments of respect for the character of the Author.

Mr. Simeon, in his *Sermons, Skeletons, and Defence of the Liturgy*, has stood forth the able and eloquent defender of the doctrines of the Reformation. By his general residence in one of the Universities, by the possession of very considerable literary powers in union with genuine piety, his efforts to combine literature and devotion in the minds of the young students, have been singularly successful.

Mr. Robinson, of Leicester, in his *Scripture Characters*, and several other writings, powerfully co-operated in the dissemination of the truths of the Gospel. The character of this venerable man has been embalmed by the masterly skill and eloquence of Mr. Hall.

Mr. Gisborne, to the vigorous powers of philosophical research, has added the chaste and manly elocution of a Minister of Christianity. While his eloquence fills and pleases the ear, by its soft and gentle, yet vigorous flow, by the spirit of devotion which it inspires, it is calculated to sink into the heart. Being strictly Evangelical, it is fitted to awaken only such impressions as tend to subliminate and purify our fallen nature. Besides his philosophical acuteness, his moral disquisitions are all distinguished by being baptized in the pure fountain of Christianity. His *Sermons* embrace both the great doctrines of the Gospel and the practical duties of the Christian life, by which it is adorned; an union which every volume of sermons should carefully preserve. In his sermons the Calvinist should observe, that the animating views of the Gospel, the humility it teaches, the faith it requires, and the sanctification it impresses, are by no means peculiar to the system of Calvinism.

Mr. Cooper, who may be considered as the rival of Mr. Gisborne, as a preacher, (a rivalry perfectly consistent with the charity of the Gospel, as it is without the smallest desire to depress each other) possesses in a high degree those qualifications of discrimination, eloquence, elegance, and of pure and fervent devotion, that are necessary to impress an enlightened Assembly. In him, the Arminian may see how consistent moderate Calvinism is with every decorous accomplishment, that adorns the Christian divine. The great popularity of the sermons published by these two divines, is a strong proof that the general taste for scriptural Divinity, and excellent composition, is rising and assuming a more elevated tone.

Dr. Buchanan, a name to be venerated by every lover of learning, as well as of Evangelical piety, has rendered the most substantial services to the cause of truth, and to the empire of religion, in works too numerous for us to particularize. All of them exhibit a mind ardent and unwearied in the cause of God and of man. With ample sources of information, he possesses that boldness of sketching which is necessary to engage the attention, and that particularity of detail which, by filling up the outlines, rewards and satisfies it. His sermons have powerfully seized and arrested the minds of men of every class, but like the works of the two preachers last mentioned, his productions are particularly fitted to instruct those who move in the more elevated and polished ranks of life.

Mr. Faber, a gentleman of various learning, and diversified talents, well known in the literary world for the deep research and the critical acumen he has shown in his work on the Prophecies, and on the mysteries of the Caberi, has performed important services to the cause of Evangelical piety.

Dr. Paley, whose name is an honour to English literature, and whose greatness of mind is evident in all his works, discovered in the early and middle stages of his career, a decided opposition to Evangelical doctrines; but in the last act of his life, he showed that a great revolution had taken place in his sentiments. In writing, and in preparing for the press, a volume of Sermons which he bequeathed to his parishioners, several of the peculiar doctrines of Christianity which he had before denied, powerfully engaged his mind. The necessity of Divine Influences, of Conversion, of thinking more of our sins, and less of our virtues, seems to have struck him with peculiar force. Though he cannot be represented, even in these sermons, as altogether Evangelical; though they are chargeable with very considerable defects, they yet give sufficient evidence of a mind dissatisfied with a secularized system of Divinity, and of a mind in the train that leads to Evangelical truth. Though the progress of his mind towards that great point of rest is unrecorded, further than it was marked by his own pen, there can be no reason to doubt that it afterwards reached a much higher degree of perfection. These sermons have had considerable influence in promoting the cause of Evangelical piety.

Dr. Haweis, in various publications, is distinguished by the possession, and by the cultivation of various and diversified talents. His Church History discovers a mind fervent and vehement in the cause of Religion; feelingly alive to the interests of Evangelical piety, but not at all times sufficiently broken to patient investigation. Hurried through scenes to the illustration of which he brought a mind equal, had he brought it more calm, his observations are sometimes superficial, not from the want of

penetration, but from the impetuosity of his feelings. They are sometimes tinctured with vulgarism, not from his want of taste, but from his neglecting to consult it. His sentiments are always pious and Evangelical, and often striking and impressive. Several characters of eminence in the religious world he has drawn with the pencil of a master. Let any unprejudiced reader examine his portrait of Whitfield, of Wesley, or of Lady Huntington, and he will acknowledge descriptive talents of no ordinary rate, and recognize the lines to be filled up with several delicate touches and finishings. Even in his happiest exhibitions, we sometimes meet a sentence that ill accords with the correct and elegant language of that which preceded it. Upon the whole, however, notwithstanding some eccentricities, his works have been greatly subservient to the promotion of Evangelical religion.—The publicity which has lately been given to the books of Homilies, and to the works of several of the Fathers of the Church of England, has powerfully co-operated with the labours of individuals, to recall the attention of her members to the pure sources of vital religion, at which her Martyrs and Confessors imbibed the doctrines they transfused into her Liturgy, and instilled into the Creed of her sons. A society formed for the purpose of supplying the poor with the book of Common Prayer, has also adopted, as part of its object, the circulation of the Homilies, and wherever these circulate the river of the water of life flows.

Though to the Clergy primarily and especially, yet not to the Clergy alone, are we to ascribe, by the blessing of God's Spirit and Providence, that flood of glory, which, within these few years has burst upon the eyes of men. Pious and able laymen, without trenching on the office of the Christian ministry, have nobly co-operated in the cause

of the Redeemer of the world. To the honour of the sex, one distinguished female who is an ornament to human nature, and to the Church of England, has brought what she herself would call her mite; but what most of her fellow worshippers, comparing it with their own tithe, would call her multifarious offerings to the sacred treasury of religion. To hundreds of thousands of the poor and illiterate, in tracts called the *Cheap Repository*, she has administered instruction, consolation, or reproof; and blending the whole with entertainment, she stole upon their attention, and fixed it before they were alarmed; caught them, as the Apostle Paul did, by an innocent craftiness and guile. The blessings of many that were ready to perish has, no doubt, come upon her, and many an eye that has never seen her, nor shall see her, till they meet before the throne of God and the Lamb, has moistened at the sight, or at the hearing of her name. Nor are the polished and gay, who move in the circles of fashion, less indebted to her for sending them, in another disguise, the doctrines of their Saviour, and the pure principles of Evangelical piety, in the elegant dress of *Cælebs in search of a Wife*. Where an Evangelical sermon would hardly find admittance, or at the best find a suspicious one, an elegant cover has opened the door to the admittance of Scriptural religion and morality. To those in the middle ranks of life, she has rendered elegant amusement the vehicle of instruction, and the improvement of the intellectual powers, subservient to the sanctification of the soul. More perhaps than any human being now alive, has she contributed to form, and to raise, the character of her own sex to the knowledge of piety and virtue, and to make the reflecting part of ours blush for their literary, their moral, and their religious defects. What man does not venerate

the sex with increased regard, and love even his own wife better, when Mrs. More has taught him to read in her mind beauties that cannot fade, and over which old age has no withering power. The works of this excellent Lady we have not time to particularize. They all of them deservedly hold a high place in the estimation of the best judges, for literary merit ; and in all of them correct and elegant sentiment is mingled with the beauties of holiness. The elegant pen of Bishop Porteus, who knew how to appreciate, and how to celebrate, worth, has assigned her a distinguished rank among the English writers, and her last publications have added other unfading honours to her name. Together with Majesty itself, and every other person and thing sacred and venerable, she has also had the honour to be ridiculed by Peter Pindar the buffoon.

About seventeen years since, Mr. Wilberforce first published his *Practical View, &c.* The well known, because well tried, abilities of this gentleman, his eloquence, his strong powers of moral discrimination, his vast information, his talent for reasoning, his deep penetration into the various forms that human passions assume, his virtues as solid as they are splendid, his fervent piety, his genuine patriotism, his universal philanthropy, and his knowledge of Christian Politics, had all combined to excite no ordinary measure of attention to his observations, on the "Prevailing Religious System of Professed Christians, in the higher and middle classes in this Country, compared with real Christianity." In this work the profundity of Philosophy, the elegance of Literature, the accuracy of the facts, and the correctness of the painting, are found united with an exhibition of Christian doctrine, the most lucid and vivid. In colours strong, but not overcharged, he represents the system of religion generally embraced,

and with the representation he contrasts the features of Christianity, as they are delineated by the Son of God, and by the Prophets and Apostles who were inspired by his Spirit. He first shows men what they are, and then what manner of persons they ought to be, in all godly conversation. The success of his work in the higher and middle ranks of life has been great, is still increasing, and it is to be hoped will continue to grow.

Mr. Soame Jenyns, in his "View of the Internal Evidence of the Christian Religion," a work which compresses much profundity and originality of thought, though by no means uniformly Evangelical, has forcibly defended the doctrine of the Trinity and Atonement against the attacks of the Unitarians, and shown that the spirit of the practical religion which the Gospel teaches, not only rises far above the maxims of philosophy, but stands, in many of the essential duties of Christianity, in direct opposition to the most applauded precepts of the men of the world. The tone of the religion enforced by this celebrated writer, appears to be both animated and sublimated, when we compare it with the vapid and grovelling system of many nominal Christians. In this respect, though he cannot be called an Evangelical writer, he is at least a writer who is the ally of those who have adopted Evangelical sentiments.

Mr. Bates, in his "Rural Philosophy," has contrived to bring into the view of his readers the great discoveries of Revelation, in all their various combinations and bearings, upon the love and the worship we owe to God, the duties we owe to ourselves, and the relative duties we are commanded to practise to our fellow men. His philosophy is wholly christianized, and his Christianity philosophized, in perfect consistency with the dignity of the one, and the

sanctity of the other. When the true principles of science, and the pure doctrines of the Gospel are harmonized, as they were in Mr. Bates's elegant mind, the author is enabled to reach distinguished excellence. When the combined influence of Christian principles and philosophical talents is exerted, for the instruction and salvation of mankind, under the conduct of a correct and chaste eloquence, the effect, in the cause of God and man, is neither without its success, nor without its reward; and in such a writer as Mr. Bates, the latter would be enjoyed in a high degree, by the attainment of the former.

To the names already mentioned we shall only add that of Granville Sharp, Esq., a name ever to be respected by the lovers of learning, as well as by the friends of genuine piety, for his abilities as a writer, for the purity of his religious sentiments, and for his distinguished philanthropy; and that of Dr. Gregory, who, in a late performance of great worth and excellence, has pleaded the cause of genuine Christianity, with great ability.* To the diffusion of Evangelical piety, two periodical works, the *Christian Observer*, and the *Christian Guardian*, both managed by Members of the Church of England, have greatly contributed. Both these works are well calculated to promote the great ends of Evangelical instruction, and to add the support of literature, talent, and taste to the pure doctrines of the Gospel.

But it is not merely to the powers of reasoning, or to the eloquence and skill of her Apologists, that Evangelical religion, in our times, owes the rapidity of her pro-

* Letters to a Friend on the Evidences, Doctrines, and Duties of the Christian Religion.

gress. Men are much more accustomed to judge of the excellence of religious systems, by the influence they have in forming the characters, and in stamping dignity and worth upon the actions of men, than by the arguments and skill of those who are their advocates. This test of religious doctrines is entitled to the greatest respect, because it is possessed of the highest authority. "By their works ye shall know them. Men do not gather grapes of thorns, nor figs of thistles." It is not our intention to insinuate, for a moment, that integrity and consistency of conduct, that purity of principle, that the most expanded philanthropy, and the most diffusive beneficence are peculiar to those who are called Evangelical; a term of distinction not always judiciously applied; to some improperly attached, and from others as improperly withheld; but it cannot be denied that many whose religious sentiments were decidedly Evangelical, have been the ornaments of society, and have never been outshone in the most substantial virtues. Where, in our times, shall we find the record of a man, in the private walks of life, whose bounty flowed in a channel so deep and wide, and with a current so strong as to reach the four quarters of the world, carrying with it balm to bind up the wounds of men's souls and bodies? Among the professors of Evangelical religion, we shall find the man to whose memory a monument is erected in every feeling breast, which time itself can hardly efface. Such, among the Evangelical worshippers who frequented the altars of the Church of England, was John Thornton, whose life was rich in good works, because it was rich in faith; and who sued for that mercy from his God, which so well he had learned to practise to his fellow men. Such was Henry Thornton; such, according to his abilities, was

Granville Sharp ; such was Sir William Dolben ; such was Isaac Hawkins ; such, with almost every accomplishment that could adorn human nature, was Lord Dartmouth ; with many other personages who have left our polluted abodes, and now shine as the sun in the Kingdom of Heaven. Such are many members of the same Church, who have adopted the same religious system ; the living examples of every grace and virtue, whose diffusive bounty, winding in secret channels, and seen only by the verdure it communicates, spreads health and joy, where distress and sickness had formerly taken up their abode. In the character of Mr. *Stanley*, it is the *name only* that is fictitious. As the Evangelical body is not without its Ranby's, it has also its Stanley Groves, where every virtue flourishes, and scatters blessings around it.—Among the Evangelical Dissenters, too, was found the celebrated John Howard, the philanthropist, the friend of God and of man, who, like his Saviour, went about doing good ; in whom all the tender sensibilities of Christianity were embodied, and shone with the brightest, and yet with the softest lustre. In the same body, characters are still to be found of the most distinguished excellence ; lights of the world, men who fill, and who adorn the stations in which they are placed.—In the Church, it is well known, that, many who entertained strong prejudices against the doctrines called Evangelical, have been, by the powerful attraction of the exemplary conduct of some who had embraced that system, brought first to examine it with candour, and afterwards to embrace its principles. When the influence of shining virtues to invite to examination, is combined with strong arguments to convince, the evidence can only be resisted by indifference, or by enmity to the truth.

The efficacy of Evangelical doctrine, in supplying the mind with subjects of consolation and hope, in the last struggles of nature, has often been felt by those whose acquaintance with it before had been very imperfect. The celebrated Mr. Locke had, long before the approach of the last foe, given many strong proofs of a mind imbued with the principles of religion, as well as with a profound knowledge of the arts and sciences. His rational powers were of the first order, and there were few topics of moral science which he did not successfully cultivate. In exploding the unwieldy system of the old scholastic philosophy, his efforts were victorious. In the formation of his religious system, however, there appears to have been great defects. But in the concluding scene of his life, his sentiments seem to have acquired the more elevated tone of Evangelical purity. Among other striking expressions he thanked God for *Justification by Faith*.

Dr. Johnson, with the possession of literary talents of the first rate that his country has ever produced, united also a high veneration for religion in general, and a devout respect for Christianity in particular. The doctrines of the Trinity and Atonement, his faith firmly embraced, and they were the sheet-anchor of his soul. The doctrine of Original Sin, he not only believed, but deeply felt, and his prayers display a mind in a perpetual struggle with that opposing principle to Christian sanctity. In most articles of the Evangelical creed he was correct, and the doctrines of Socinianism he viewed with horror. With the great doctrine of Justification by Faith in the Redeemer's blood, though the necessary consequence of the doctrine of the Atonement which he had embraced, till nearly the conclusion of his life, he was either unacquainted, or if he knew it, he did not believe in it. As he ap-

proached the end of his course, he began to feel how utterly inadequate his own works were to purchase peace with Heaven ; and how necessary to his present peace and to his future hopes, the possession of a righteousness was, commensurate to the demands of the Divine law. Alarm and terror were the necessary consequences. "Though truly religious," says an ingenious writer, "though the Scriptures had been his study and the rule of his conduct, he contemplated his end with fear and apprehension ; but when the last struggle approached, he summoned up the resolution of a Christian, and on the 13th day of December, 1784, died full of hope and strong in Faith."* The writer just quoted has recorded the sense of danger that alarmed the mind of this great man, and his escape from it into the region of faith and hope ; but of the cause that produced so mighty an effect, by dispelling his terrors, he gives no account. The consciousness of guilt that must appal every reflecting mind, when it anticipates the Judgment seat of the great God, and the opening of his books, will not be conjured away by summoning up resolution. Resolution will neither arm a man against eternal misery, nor reconcile him to suffer it. It is alone the possession of the lively faith of a Christian, that can enable him to exert the resolution of a Christian. - Dr. Mavor does not appear to have known, that it was the cordial acceptance of the doctrine of Justification by Faith, in the Righteousness of the Saviour, that dispelled Dr. Johnson's alarms, and raised his soul to a triumph over death, which no other doctrine can inspire. This happy exchange of mourning, for the oil of joy and

* Dr. Mavor's British Nepos.

gladness; and of the heavy heart, for the garment of praise, was effected by the instrumentality of an Evangelical divine, whose character is well known in the religious world.

Mr. Pitt, whose vast and capacious mind, by the blessing of Providence, sustained unbroken, the shock of nations combined to destroy every thing that was sacred and venerable, under the direction of an infuriated monster, triumphant in villainy,—Mr. Pitt, whose counsels animated, as they presided over the efforts of his country, to rescue Europe from the brink of destruction, worn out at last with toils, and the overpowering weight of cares to which his bodily constitution was unequal, having delivered up the helm of state to the grasp of a less vigorous hand, retired to prepare for the change that must soon terminate the labours, as well as the enjoyments of mortals. This awful retirement discovered to him, what, there is reason to fear, the pursuits of even honourable ambition, and the toils of honest patriotism, had too much obstructed from his view, his need of the Saviour's atoning blood, and sanctifying grace, to present him without spot or blemish before the throne of God. He who had, in a subordinate sense, been the saviour of the civilized world, felt his own unworthiness, and humbly supplicated for eternal life as the gift of God, through Jesus Christ. His application to the Saviour was that of a sinner, who had no other plea to urge than the promises and compassions of Him, who is able to save to the uttermost all who come to God through Him, seeing he ever lives to make intercession for them.

The elegant and penetrating mind of Mr. Fox, that had explored and treasured up the vast stores of moral and political philosophy, and knew how to discharge

them in a torrent of overwhelming eloquence that hurled conviction into the minds of his opponents, or swept from their hands the arms with which they opposed him, though unhappily too much diverted by his other pursuits, from the fountain of eternal truth, left his dying testimony to this truth, that man is a creature who stands in need of *Mercy*.

The power of the Evangelical doctrines in communicating light to the minds, and in planting new principles in the hearts of those who, sunk in the gulf of infidelity, and immersed in the sensualities of degrading pleasure, have been recovered to the enjoyment of God, of themselves, and of Christian society, has, in many instances, appeared in a striking point of view. Of this class of persons we shall mention one, the more conspicuous for the high rank in which he stood, and the great natural and acquired abilities which he possessed. The Earl of Rochester was a nobleman of talents sprightly and brilliant, of learning various and polished, of wit vigorous and sparkling. But all these advantages were lost to himself and to his country, by habits of dissipation and debauchery, contracted in early life, and still more confirmed by almost perpetual intoxication, and intrenched in the most resolute infidelity. His very soul seemed to be so steeped in polluting pleasures, as to have entirely forgotten her original dignity, and, oppressed with a load of clay, to have buried her active and noble powers in the most disgusting sensuality. The consequences of this licentiousness were, that at the age of thirty-one, a period of life at which the beauties of the human constitution are generally only full-blown, and its energies most vigorous, in him nature was worn out, and all the funds of life exhausted. Stretched on the bed of sickness and pain, of languor and decay,

and possessing nothing of his youth, but the sins of it, which transfixed him with anguish and with horrors unutterable ; his conscience awakened from its long sleep, stung him with remorse, the poison of which drank up his spirits. In this awful situation, the gates of Heaven seemed to be shut against him, while hell from beneath seemed to be opening and ready to receive him, the inmost recesses of his soul were harrowed up.—By the instructions of his Diocesan, of Dr. Burnet and of Mr. Parsons, it pleased God to touch his heart, and from the rock thus smitten, the tears of godly repentance gushed. In reading to him the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, a beam of Divine light darted through his mind. He looked on Him whom he had pierced, and mourned ; and his perception of the great doctrine of the Atonement was as vivid as if the scene of the crucifixion had passed before his eyes. Gratitude to the blessed Redeemer who had washed him from his sins in his own blood, now took possession of his heart. His soul was purified from the contamination of unchaste desires, and his thoughts brought into subjection to the law on which before he had trampled. His throat that, like an open sepulchre, had breathed pestilence and death, and scattered all around him the fatal poison, now gave vent to Hallelujahs and songs of praise. At last, he met death with triumphant hope, and now, we have reason to believe, that he walks in brightness with the virgin retinue of the Lamb. In a book entitled “ Some passages of the Life and Death of John, Earl of Rochester,” written by Dr. Burnet, the account of this wonderful change is given to the world, “ which,” says Dr. Johnson, “ the Critic ought to read for its elegance, the philosopher for its arguments, and the saint for its

piety."* Mr. Parsons's Funeral Sermon, which is commonly bound with it, places in a still more prominent point of view the effect which Evangelical Religion had on the conversion of that Nobleman.

The cautious and correct pen of Dr. Doddridge has exhibited, from the most authentic sources of information, the influence of Evangelical doctrine in regenerating the heart, and in forming the future conduct of Colonel Gardiner, who, once addicted to the most abandoned profligacy, and the slave of every unhallowed appetite and passion, was, by Divine Grace, exalted into the Christian hero, and who proved the reality of his conversion by a life of the most fervent piety and dignified virtue, till he offered it a sacrifice to the religion and liberty of his country. Volumes might be filled with the biography of men, who, from the same pure fountain, have imbibed the principles of vital religion, and whose stellar virtues, shone with a blaze steady and increasing, till they sunk beneath our horizon, to mingle with the light of a purer day.

In the records of those who have fallen a sacrifice to the violated laws of their country, the number of such as, by the influence of Evangelical doctrine, have been brought to contrition for their crimes, and to a state of reconciliation with God, appears to have been very considerable. The evidence of their sincerity has, in many cases, been of the most convincing kind. Though before the great doctrine of the Atonement made by our Saviour, on the cross, for the sins of a guilty world, had been impressed on their minds, their hearts had been hard and unfeeling, yet at the touch of this heavenly doctrine they

* *Lives of the British Poets, Vol. I.—Life of Rochester.*

have melted, and the heart of stone has been softened into a heart of flesh. Various well authenticated instances of this kind, will be found in the pages of the Christian Observer.

The Evangelical body in the Church of England is composed of men whose religious sentiments, on some subjects, are susceptible of some small shades of difference. Some, and perhaps the greater part, because they admit the doctrine of absolute election, and its necessary consequence, final perseverance, are commonly called Calvinists; though these are the only two of the peculiarities of Calvin that they adopt. Reprobation and particular redemption are, in general, no parts of their creed. Of the same Evangelical body there are a considerable number, who consider election as conditional, and who, of course, do not hold the doctrine of final perseverance; but believe that men may be truly sanctified, and yet by the want of watchfulness and prayer may fall into sinful habits, and be finally lost. Some of these admit, that there is a state of confirmed piety and virtue, attainable in this life, from which there is no final fall. Besides those who, on the subjects of election and perseverance, are of opposite sentiments, there are a few who consider the doctrine of absolute, and the doctrine of conditional decrees, as encumbered with difficulties on both sides, which are altogether insuperable, so that they find themselves unable to arrive at a satisfactory solution on these topics. They therefore wish to stand on clear and undebatable ground, and to leave to those whose eye is more penetrating than their own, the task of exploring these mysterious regions. They acknowledge that there are many things in Scripture, which seem favourable to the Calvinistic hypothesis of absolute decrees; but they also think, that there are many

others which can hardly be reconciled to that doctrine. Without adopting the one side or the other, on this controversy, they wish to stand as neutrals themselves, and yet are ready to rush between the protended spears of the angry combatants of both sides, and in the language of the Prophet to address them, "Ye are brethren, why do ye wrong one to another?" It is not, they say from timidity, or from any desire of conciliating the men of the world, that they have no arms for this war; they are not irresolute, but they want satisfactory information. Were their judgments convinced on which side the truth lay, their conduct would be decided. They think that the great doctrines on which all the evangelical are harmonious, "The depravity of human nature by the Fall; the liability of all men as sinners to the wrath of God; the necessity of Divine Grace to prevent us that we may have a good will, and to work with us when we have that good will; Justification by Faith, through the Redemption of Christ, and not by our own works," are sufficient grounds of union and co-operation, without descending to those abstruse points on which Christians have differed, and to the end of the world are likely to differ. They are sorry to observe, that the disputants, on both sides, have suffered themselves to be too much heated in a controversy, to the decision of which, coolness is absolutely necessary; and have given as much scope to their worst passions, as to the arguments by which they have tried to establish their opposite systems. They embrace with equal affection those who are called Calvinists and Arminians, and they think that the excellencies of the partizans of those two systems, are to be determined rather by the preponderance of their humility, their love to God and to man, and their exemplary lives, than by the weight of

their zeal for the doctrines either of Calvin or of Arminius. They acknowledge that, mingled with both parties, there are men of distinguished talents and warm piety, who, adorned with every virtue, reflect that light and glory back upon Christianity, which they have derived from it. They are also forced to observe, that there are connected with both, several individuals, whose zeal is expended more upon points of difference, than upon those in which they coalesce, whose arguments are more distinguished by smoke than by brightness, and who rather derive their honour from the body to which they are attached, than contribute to its eminence and distinction.

A variety of causes have contributed to render the doctrines of Calvinism extremely unpopular in England. The first is, its having been the religious system generally embraced by those who, in Charles the First's time, overturned the Constitution, and brought that Monarch to the block. The violence of the Calvinistic party in Holland, and their bitter persecution of those who, on political grounds, as well as on the subject of election, were in a state of counteraction with them, was another source of obloquy. The adoption of reprobation, as the counterpart of election, by those who took the highest ground on this awful subject, contributed greatly to render their system unpopular. The stiff and formal air, with which some divines have invested the doctrines of Calvinism, by reducing them to a dry metaphysical system, and the subtraction from it by others, of all exhortations to accept the invitations of the Gospel, by robbing Christianity of all that either rouses the fears, or interests the hopes of men, have operated greatly to its prejudice. The scrupulosity of Calvinists in avoiding the use of terms employed in the Scriptures to point out the extent of Redemption;

and the substitution of phrases more congenial with limited views of that doctrine, have been urged by different writers, as spots and blemishes attached to Calvinism. It has also been generally charged with promoting a starched and precise, instead of the popular style employed in the sacred volume. A great want of candour has certainly appeared in the writings of some Calvinists, who, not satisfied with bringing to the support of their peculiarities all the arguments they could muster, have had recourse to the illiberal arts of misrepresentation, and have classed Arminians with Roman Catholics, and even with Arians and Socinians. Calvinism, it must be added, though it has been embraced and defended by a numerous body of writers, and some of them men of great learning and acuteness, has not, so often as the system that is opposed to it, found its advocates among the eloquent and elegant authors, on whom wait all the graces and charms of polished diction.

To those Clergymen of the Church of England who are called Calvinists, it is only doing justice to state, that their Calvinism in general is not only moderate, but conciliating. They do not, in general, bring into the services of religion discussions of this deeply mysterious subject. The doctrines to which, in their sermons, they give prominence are those of Evangelical Religion, without much calling the attention of men to the various shades that distinguish its friends from each other. Few expressions generally escape them, that would sound harsh in the ears of a pious disciple of Arminius. Their aims are to conciliate, not to exasperate the minds of those who cannot adopt all their views. Their views of predestination appear to be precisely the same with those of Cranmer, Hooper, Philpot, and almost all the Bishops, Dig-

nltaries, and Divines of the Church, till towards the end of James the First's reign. Some excellent men, such as Usher, Whitgift, &c. carried the doctrine of absolute decrees much higher, and embraced the whole system of Calvin. The same moderate system was received by the most eminent of the Dissenters; by Baxter, by Watts, by Doddridge; and, if Dr. Williams's sentiments may be considered as a fair specimen of the modern Calvinism that circulates among the present Dissenters, it is of the same temperate kind. In the Church, as well as among Dissentients, an individual or two may sometimes be found, who has adopted a more rigid and a sterner creed. Of this kind was Mr. Toplady, whom Dr. Priestley in his *Essay on Philosophical Necessity*, claims as his associate in his labours to establish that doctrine. Even the great Edwards is also mentioned by the Doctor, as having adopted the same principles. From the Restoration to our times, the number of those who have been reckoned Calvinists has not been great. Bishop Beveridge is the most eminent, and is supposed to have been the last divine of such sentiments, that was raised to the Episcopal bench. Dr. South, though a clergyman of High Church principles, has left incontestible evidence, in his sermons, of his having adopted sentiments called Calvinistical. Within these thirty years their number has rapidly increased. Their fervent piety,* their exemplary conduct and moderation, their unwearied labours in the cause of religion, in gene-

* The fervent piety of some Ministers of Calvinistic sentiments has, sometimes, forcibly struck those whose opinions were decidedly hostile to Calvinism; and even to all the Evangelical doctrines. Such was the Poet Burns, who latterly attended upon the ministry of a pious and excellent Minister of Calvinistic sentiments, the Rev. William Inglis, Dumfries.

ral, and the patience with which they have borne many privations and hardships, are supposed greatly to have contributed to their increase. The violence and illiberality of attack, which seem now to have deserted this party and to have passed over to those who call themselves Arminians, the confounding of the vital doctrines of Christianity with the peculiarities of Calvinism, and the attempts to prove the Articles of the Church to be Anti-Calvinistic, have all greatly added to their numbers. The Bishop of Lincoln allows the attachment of some of them to the Church, to be firm and resolute.—Mr. Scott insinuates, that some of the Bishops have refused ordination to some young men, who had been regularly educated at the Universities; for no other reason, than their supposed belief in the doctrine of absolute election. But there must surely have been some other reason for such refusals. No Bishop, surely, would deliberately provide men of piety and popular talents and furnished with the advantages of literature, to figure in the ranks of Dissent, or of Methodism. There have been instances of men possessed of such qualifications as have carried hundreds, and even thousands with them into the lines of hostility to the Church. That general who thins his own ranks that he may fill those of the enemy, with whom he may one day come to a decisive engagement, is in some danger of returning from the field, without the palm of victory.

Of the Evangelical Clergy who are disciples of the Arminian school, there are men of tried piety, of distinguished abilities, and who are equally sedulous, as those from whom they differ, in promoting the best interests of men. Their own views of those disputed subjects, they generally prosecute with calm and unruffled minds, and instead of converting the pulpit into a stage for the trial of polemical

cal skill, they unite the doctrines of grace and *peace*. A moderate Calvinist would seldom be able to decide, from their discourses, that they had adopted a system different from his own. Man is still considered as a creature fallen and guilty, who can be restored to the image of his Maker, only by the influence of the Holy Spirit, and who can approach to his Creator only when he comes through the mediation of the Son of God, and receives the gift of righteousness by faith. In the habits of Christian friendship, which are mutually cultivated by Evangelical clergymen, who embrace the different sides of this question, mutual conciliation, and the spirit of mutual forbearance are carefully prosecuted. It was not so about half a century ago, when the same controversy came to be agitated between the two different parties, both in and out of the Church. The subject was debated with all the acrimony of envenomed passions. Pamphlet was heaped upon pamphlet, and volume piled upon volume, mutually to embitter the tempers of the parties, and to blow up the sparks of contention. The men of the world stood spectators of the combat, while the friends of Evangelical religion, like gladiators, exhibited for their diversion feats of chivalry, and dealt mutual wounds. "It is just," said they, "as we would have it. We have only to look on till they drench the sand with their own blood, and expire in their own wars." Profane wits beheld with scorn the scene that was presented before them, while they exclaimed in the language of the poet—

"—— Tantæne animis coelestibus ira?"

THE CHARACTERS AND QUALIFICATIONS OF THE EVANGELICAL CLERGY.

IN every Church, and in every party in every Church, learning is an object of high importance. In the first Christian Church, inspiration supplied, in many of her Ministers, the want of learning. What they had not derived from human culture and study, God miraculously communicated. But even in that early period of the Church, he who had taken care that Moses should be instructed in all the learning of the Egyptians, preparatory to the important office in which he had destined him to act, also prepared the Apostle Paul, by sending him not only to the schools of the Prophets, but also by providing that *he* should be well imbued with the learning of the Gentile world, who was afterwards to be the *Apostle of the Gentiles*. To the labours of this learned Apostle, more, perhaps, than to those of all the others united, is the Christian Church indebted. In our times, where learning is wanting, there is no such thing as inspiration to supply its place. The Ministers of Christianity are therefore obliged to seek, in the ordinary way of discipline and study, that information which is necessary to the proper discharge of their office. Indeed, with respect to all the Apostles, it is a certain fact that they were well skilled in languages; the only difference between them and learned men of these times is, in the manner of acquiring that knowledge. Many of the Evangelical Clergy have been, and many of them still are, men

of deep and general learning, and well known both for the correctness and elegance of their literature. The names of Dr. Milner and Dr. Jowett, the last of whom was what the other continues to be, an honour to that body, are well known, and are only two out of many that might be mentioned. In one of the Universities particularly, many students of Evangelical principles have stood among the first, and have often carried away the highest honours. With respect to genius and transcendent abilities, they are flowers that blossom but rarely, even in the ample field of the world, and are sometimes so wild and so luxurious in their growth, that they refuse to submit to those retrenchments, which the culture of religion requires. But even of these, Evangelical Religion has no reason to complain that she has wanted her share. Men of moderate accomplishments, in religion as well as in civil society, are the persons to whom the offices of religion, as well as the management of business must chiefly be committed, and of these the Evangelical Clergy are chiefly composed. Among them too, some persons of weak intellects and contracted sentiments may be found, whose minds are too flimsy to admit of a high polish; but in no greater proportion to their numbers, than the state of other parties, political or religious, exhibits.

Of the qualifications of a Clergyman, unfeigned piety is certainly the primary one, and is indispensably necessary, both to his own fitness for the work, and to his hopes of success in it. If a Clergyman is not pious, he is among the worst of men. If his love to God and to the souls of men is not ardent, his official employment must render his whole life one scene of disgusting hypocrisy. It is impossible for a man always to act under a mask. The cover will sometimes drop, and the man of

the world will desecrate the priest of the Most High God. The secularizing spirit, which has given to learning the first place in the qualifications necessary to a Clergyman, has done infinite mischief in the religious world. Even the eyes of the vulgar are sufficiently keen to detect its absurdity. Common sense pronounces, that in the teacher of piety nothing can supply the want of piety; as in the teacher of science, science must be the primary qualification. We have known attornies and surgeons, who were wholly destitute of classical learning, who were yet in their particular professions, men of worth and of respectable talents. But the possession of the highest classical attainments, without the knowledge of law and anatomy, could never qualify them for even the lowest offices of those professions. He who would not commit the care of his broken bones, to the ignorance of the one, or the defence of his title to his estate to the incompetency of the other, and who yet would entrust his soul, and all its hopes for eternity, to the tuition and instructions of one who had never made the Scriptures his principal study, or religion his highest pleasure, would only do it because he set a higher value upon the former than upon the latter. We have known Ministers of Christianity, whose learning and talents were but of the lower order, who yet, by their piety and good sense, were honoured and useful while they lived, and who died lamented by all that knew them. But let not learning be either despised or neglected. Though it is not the first, it is certainly a secondary qualification, and in the present highly cultivated state of society in this country, a considerable degree of it is absolutely necessary to a Minister of Christianity, that he may neither disgrace his office nor himself.

In what soil genuine piety may be found more healthy and vigorous, than among those Clergymen of the Church, who are justly denominated Evangelical, a considerable acquaintance with religious parties, has not enabled us to say. We believe they will not suffer by a comparison with any other Ministers of Christianity, in the estimation of those whose opportunities have been most favourable for forming a judgment, and whose penetration and spirituality of mind have best enabled them to pronounce it. Though the doctrines by which they are characterized are often described as leading to Antinomianism, yet by many of their fellow Churchmen they are represented as *righteous over much*. With the peculiar doctrines of Christianity, they associate a strictness of practical religion and morality, that to the man of the world the air in which they live, feels too rarified for his respiration, and he seeks a denser atmosphere to breathe in. Nor do they, in general, bind heavy burthens on other men's shoulders, and refuse to carry them themselves. Follow them to their houses, the lifting up of their hands presents the morning and the evening sacrifice. The perpetual fire burns. Their preparatory studies are often laborious; their incomes small, their duties and their labours multifarious, and their amusements few; yet, contented and happy, they suffer privations without murmuring, and from their little board they contrive to spare something for the needy of the flock. Happy in their reward, if the tender plants that employ all their care, which they have endeavoured to meliorate and to water, rise with strength and life, bud, blossom, and bear fruit. Distressed only when the mildew, or some chilling blast threatens to render all their labours vain. The faithful shepherd of his flock, the Evangelical Clergyman, is

interested in all their concerns, and alarmed by all their dangers; he enters into, and sympathizes with all their feelings and wants. Like his Divine Master, he learns, in subordination to Him, "to gather the lambs with his arm, to carry them in his bosom, and gently to lead the nursing ewes." In health he watches over them with solicitude. In affliction he visits them with tenderness and compassion. In their prosperity, he is anxious that their hearts be not corrupted with its intoxicating draught; in adversity, that they may not sink under the corrections of Providence, nor faint when they are rebuked of God. He is in practice every thing which Dr. Goldsmith has so beautifully described in his *Deserted Village*, the village preacher to have been. Such are many of those Clergymen, and indeed most of them of whom the world has not learned to form a proper value, and whose character is little known beyond the narrow limits of a country parish, in which they shone as lights in the firmament.

"Of the professional labours," says a respectable author, "and consistent conduct of some men of this character, had I not been myself an eye-witness for years together, I should scarcely have believed that Christianity, as we find it in Scripture, was so justly reflected in the lives of any of its professors, in these days of lukewarmness and indifference; or that there were any at this time who made so near approaches to what the Ministers of the Gospel once were, and what they ought at all times to be.

"And yet, 'tell it not in Gath,' publish it not in the ears of the enemies of the Church, or of religion, such men, and many such there doubtless are at this day, besides those whom I have the happiness to know

(classed if not mixed with others, I admit, of a less honourable and consistent deportment; but I speak not here of men who can be justly charged with heterodoxy, irregularity, or enthusiasm)—even such men are viewed with contempt, and loaded with opprobrious names by many of their brethren and others;—by those in particular, it is presumed, I will not say, who are the least distinguished by their piety and worth, but rather, who have the misfortune to know them the least.

“ I have, however, no hesitation in saying, that I know of no set of men in any church, sect, or country, who have themselves made higher attainments in religion,—or who aim more steadfastly and uniformly to promote the cause of religion in others; and none, of course, who deserve better of their country, and of mankind in general. And, however much any may have vainly attempted to obscure the lustre of such characters, I firmly believe, and I believe it on clear Scriptural authority, that not a few of them shall shine hereafter ‘ *as the brightness of the firmament—and as stars for ever and ever.* ’ ”*

Besides piety and learning, good sense is a qualification of the greatest importance to a Clergyman; and without it, both the other two qualifications will often defeat themselves, and be of little avail to secure his aims. Prudence, or a sense of propriety in all his conduct, results from the possession of this faculty, and the want of it deranges and disorders the efforts of genius, the investigations of learning, and even the productions of piety. It cannot be supposed that this excellent talent

* Adam's Religious World Displayed, Vol. 2. Article—“ United Church of England and Ireland.”

will be the property of every Evangelical Divine. Many Clergymen of that description, however, it is well known, have, at their induction to a parish, met the most determined dislike and opposition, from a general aversion to the doctrines they inculcated, who, afterwards, by their perseverance in the labours of love, and by the consistency and dignity of their conduct, have not only softened the asperities of prejudice, but conciliated, in a high degree, the affections of many, and secured the respect of all their parishioners. Success of this kind is the most honourable testimony that a man can receive of the purity of his life, of the efficacy of his doctrine, and of the prudence which has presided over his conduct. It were easy to give a long list of names to whom this characteristic of good sense was, and is incontrovertibly applicable.



THE CHARGES GENERALLY BROUGHT AGAINST EVANGELICAL CLERGYMEN.

THE first charge is innovation. In those Churches or Chapels, in which the peculiar doctrines of Christianity have either been little adverted to, or thrown into the back ground, by the Ministers of religion in their discourses, and consequently the gospel imperfectly preached; when those doctrines are made to occupy the first place in the system of Theology, and laid down as the foundation of piety and morality, every man of penetration must perceive, that on the subject of public instruction,

a great change has taken place. If the latter discipline be that to which he has not been accustomed, to him it will be new, and the preacher will be considered by him as an innovator. But who is to blame for this innovation? Is it the preacher who kept out of sight, in a great measure, the truths which fill almost every page of the New Testament; the truths to which the Articles and Homilies of his own Church bear the most indubitable testimony, and which constitute the vital principle that pervades and animates her Liturgy? Or is the blame to be transferred to him, who has brought into the most conspicuous point of view, that system which constitutes the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, which constitutes the basis of the Church establishment, and to which he himself has subscribed? He who violates the discipline of the Church is an innovator; but it is not the man who preaches her doctrines, but the man who either neglects to preach them, or who preaches those that are hostile to them, that innovates.

Another charge brought against them is enthusiasm. It cannot be denied that there have been some instances of Evangelical Clergymen, who were not entirely free from this extravagance, and perhaps there may be some individuals of that body, at present, who cannot be altogether exempted from the charge. But these are but few, and instead of being admired for their eccentricities, by the general body of those whose sentiments, in other things, they adopt; their ebullitions are generally disliked and condemned. Sobriety of doctrine, and temperance in the manner of inculcating it, are the characteristics, in an eminent degree, of the most distinguished Clergymen who have adopted Evangelical sentiments. If their elocution is animated, it is addressed much more to the judg-

ment and to the conscience, than to the imagination of their hearers. The object of it is not to wind up the feelings of men, or to overpower the rational springs of action, or to give loose reins to tumultuous impulses, feelings, or passions; but to fix permanent impressions upon the judgment, heart, and memory, which ripening into holy principles, may by the blessing of God, produce the peaceable fruits of righteousness. With some men, indeed, all earnestness in religion; all ardour and zeal in the cause of God; all deep concern about the immortal souls of men; all attempts to rouse them to the awful concerns of eternity, are considered as infallible evidences of enthusiasm. To them every thing appears enthusiastic, that stretches beyond their present narrow grasp, or that rises above their sensual gratifications. To such men, all those who, expanding their desires and hopes beyond the grave, *look not at the things which are seen, and which are temporal; but at the things which are not seen, and are eternal*, must ever appear in the character of enthusiasts. But this is an enthusiasm in which every Christian will glory, and desire to grow; knowing that his warmest emotions are but too feeble, and too cold. No sober-minded Christian will, however, lay claim to any private revelation. The influences of God's Spirit he distinguishes from the operations of his own mind, not by any distinctive feeling; but by the holy dispositions they produce, by the obedience they generate, and by that abhorrence of sin which they awaken. To preserve our religious principles and feelings from the infection of a teeming imagination, a general and correct acquaintance with the word of God is the best security. The next best, is the cultivation of those human sciences, that teach men to abstract as well as to combine their ideas, and to analyze

their opinions. Whatever addition is made to intellectual vigour, so much provision will be made against enthusiasm, which is the imbecility and dotage of the mind.

A disposition to allegorize those passages of Scripture which are evidently meant to be taken literally, and which consequently, are not susceptible of an allegorical interpretation, is another charge, nearly allied to the former, that has been brought against the Evangelical Clergy. It must be acknowledged that the charge has not been altogether without foundation, if it were fair to make the delinquency of a few individuals, the subject of a general accusation. The parable of the man who fell among thieves, in his journey from Jerusalem to Jericho, may be taken as a specimen of the fanciful superstructure that has been raised without a foundation, on texts of the plainest import. A certain lawyer, we are told (Luke, x.), tempted our Saviour with this question, "Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" Our Saviour refers him to the substance of the law, and desires him to state its requisitions. Having given its import with respect to the love of God, the statement ends with "thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." Our Saviour admits the correctness of it, and adds, "this do, and thou shalt live." But he, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, "And who is my neighbour?" This lawyer, like too many nominal Christians, though he allowed in words the obligation of loving God, supposed that his being a professor of the *true religion* settled the whole of that account, and that all examination of its items, was wholly unnecessary. With respect to the duty he owed to his neighbour, he felt the necessity of entering into the detail, and as all his hopes of Heaven which he was very unwilling to relinquish, depended upon the contraction, or upon

the enlargement of the term, he desired an explanation. He was conscious, that he loved his own nation, and he hoped that this was sufficient to entitle him to the reward of obedience. Our Saviour puts a case in which a Jew, his countryman, to whom he was attached by every tie of country and religion, had fallen into the cruel hands of robbers, who, after having stripped and wounded him, left him for dead. By chance a certain Priest came down that way, and casts his eyes on the unhappy victim, weltering in his blood. But this minister of the God of mercy, had never learned the compassionate maxim of his own law, "I will have mercy rather than sacrifice." He therefore passes by on the one side, and steels his heart against every sentiment of compassion. A Levite too, another Minister of the sanctuary, travelling by the same road, came and looked upon him, but his heart had never been taught to feel for the woes of others, and he passed by on the other side, and left him to become the prey of death, which seemed to hover over him, ready to assert her claim. "But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on him; and went to him, and bound up his wounds; pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence and gave them to the host, and said unto him, 'Take care of him, and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again I will repay thee.' Which now of these three," said our Saviour to the Lawyer, "thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves?" The Lawyer replied, "he that had mercy on him." "Then said Jesus unto him, 'Go, and do

thou likewise.'” As if our Saviour had said, “ You highly approve the offices of kindness which the Samaritan performed to the Jew in distress, and your law binds you to do to others what things soever, in similar circumstances, you think yourself entitled to from them. Every human being is, therefore, your neighbour, who has a claim upon you, as you have upon him, for the reciprocal communication of benefits and love. Your beneficence, therefore, which acknowledges none for its objects, but men of your own country and religion, is essentially defective ; and till its principle become universal, it is not the obedience that your law requires.” This divine comment, it is of infinite importance that every man should record in his own breast ; for such is the corruption of our nature, that almost every party, political and religious, is too much disposed to contract within its own circle, that interchange of philanthropy, which ought expansively to flow among mankind ; and thus to establish a rule of morality, narrow and partial, and in direct opposition to the diffusive and universal charity of the Gospel. But passing over this important document, there have been some Evangelical Divines, both Churchmen and Dissenters, who have attempted to squeeze out of this parable, all the peculiar doctrines of Christianity ; and have forced it to teach all the truths connected with the Fall, and with the Redemption of man. The man who fell among the thieves, say they, was Adam. He being left half dead means that he and his posterity are dead in sin. The priest and the Levite are the moral and the ceremonial law, that refused to help us. The good Samaritan—But let us stop. The enemies of Evangelical doctrine will tell the rest with pleasure. The bitterest invective with which the peculiar truths of Christianity

have ever been attacked, by its most inveterate foes, is harmless, compared with this dotage of intellect. There are, however, but few Evangelical Ministers capable of thus disgracing religion; and none have been more forward to expose the folly of it, than the friends of Evangelical piety. In the *Christian Observer*, there is a letter from the Rev. Peter O'Leary, a Roman Catholic priest, to the editor of that work, giving an account of a sermon preached by himself, upon this very parable, in the true spirit of allegorical romance; which mode of interpretation, he says he adopts, because it is highly favourable to the interests of his Church. The man who fell among the thieves, he says, is the Catholic Church. The thieves were Luther and Calvin, who stripped the Church of her rites, ceremonies, and doctrines. With respect to the Church being left half dead, his interpretation is almost the same with that of the Evangelical divines, formerly mentioned. The priest and the Levite represent two of the Monkish orders, who were unable to effect the recovery of the Church. The good Samaritan he very ingeniously proves to be no other than the Pope.—This excellent discourse of Priest O'Leary, in which he has, with great force, wrested the illustrations from the hands of the Evangelical preacher, and turned the materials to his own use, is a happy specimen of the benefits to be derived from the immeasurable latitude of fanciful interpretation. This specimen of Mr. O'Leary's powers for fanatical illustration, is said to have excited in a high degree the indignation of one Clergyman; but we cannot help thinking that it gave much satisfaction to all men of sober fancy, and correct understanding. *Ridentem dicere verum quid velat?* Some men will feel the force of ridicule, who cannot be

brought to feel the force of argument; and men may be laughed out of their follies, who cannot be reasoned out of them.

There is another species of folly, nearly related to the other, to which some Evangelical ministers, both out of the Church and in it, are said to have given indulgence. When they represent the love of the blessed Saviour to his Church, and the individuals of which it is composed; or the gratitude which this unbounded love kindles in the heart of a Christian, they call in the mystical dialogue of the Song of Solomon, and employ its metaphors and similes, many of which, to us at least, are either not very intelligible, or so exceedingly remote from those to which we are accustomed in the writings of the New Testament, that we have no commentary to explain them. In other words, they call in the darkest part of the Old Testament, to illustrate the glories and beauties of the Gospel; as if the sun needed a candle to light up, or to display his beams. We would fain ask such ministers of Christianity, Is there any thing wrapped up in the mystical allusions of the Song of Solomon, which the New Testament has not placed in a clearer light, and exhibited with a glory infinitely superior? If there is not, why then do you seek to throw under a cover what the Gospel has unveiled, and to envelope in darkness what it has brought to light? Why, instead of illustrating what is dark by what is clear, do you seek to hide what is lucid, by bringing a cloud over it, and when life and immortality, and a Saviour's dying love are set before us in the blaze of day, do you bring us back again to the shadows after the substance has chased them away. A predilection for the eastern allegorical style of composition, how well so ever that style was suited to the country and to the time in

which the Song of Solomon was written, is, in these times, a poor evidence of a man's possessing either a solid understanding, or a correct taste. How extremely different is the style of our Saviour, and of his Apostles, and Evangelists. We do not, for a moment, question either the Authenticity or the Inspiration of the Song of Solomon. It is unquestionably a part of the Canon of Scripture, which the Christian Church has received from the Jews, to whom were committed the lively Oracles of God. It had its use, when the great doctrines of our Redemption were wrapped up in covers. To us it has its use, when we see in it a rude sketch of the glorious salvation the Gospel has unfolded. It is worthy of our particular observation, that neither our Saviour himself, nor any of his Apostles or Evangelists, in the New Testament, have either quoted it, or employed any of its peculiar images; and surely the similes which they use, and the language in which they spoke, are the consecrated vehicles of Evangelical instruction. We frequently find, that a rank imagination and a perplexed intellect, are the general qualifications of those who are fondest of this allegorical mode of preaching; and there have been various instances of their approaching even to indelicacy, by saying that which made every body blush for them, though they had not reflection enough to blush for themselves.

Another charge brought against the discourses of the Evangelical Clergy is, that the paucity of the topics they embrace, and the weight they lay upon them, generally confine their instructions to a few subjects, and prohibit that ample range into which a more extended and generous system would invite their excursions. That the great truths of the Gospel are reduced to a few first principles, is a position that cannot be denied; and, considering the

vast importance attached to them, this paucity is among those considerations which most forcibly illustrate the excellence of the Christian Faith. Had its leading articles of belief been multifarious and complicated, the attention they would have required from those who embrace it, must have been more divided, and consequently must have been more distracted. The fewness of its influencing topics is, therefore, a circumstance that particularly adapts it to the condition of man, whose mind is liable to be broken or overwhelmed, by a multiplicity of great and important objects. The simplicity by which the Christian system is distinguished from the complex and folded intricacies of human Science, is wonderfully adapted to the weakness of the human mind. Neither great nor brilliant talents are necessary to qualify a man for entering into the views, and for acting upon the principles it inculcates. The love of our Creator, of our Redeemer, of our Sanctifier; and, in subordination to the love of God, the love of ourselves, in unison with the love of human beings in general, are the substance of all its requisitions. The possession of these dispositions is called in Scripture a *single eye*; and he in whom they dwell has his whole body full of light. But notwithstanding the simplicity of the motives that animate Christian obedience, the subjects it embraces are complicated and many, and yet so simplified by the plain instructions it gives, that nothing but the absence, or the imperfection of the principle, can cause a deviation from the practice. *The way-faring man, though a fool, shall not err therein.*

If, by the paucity of the topics which Evangelical instruction contains, it is insinuated that the public discourses of its ministers are generally confined to the doctrines of Grace, and the promises of the Gospel, without

enforcing the necessity of the tempers the Gospel is designed to form, the dispositions it is intended to superinduce, and the relative duties it enjoins, the charge is of a serious and most awful kind, and one to which every preacher of the Gospel will do well to attend. He who confines his attention to what have, very improperly, been sometimes called the doctrines of Christianity, in distinction from its precepts and laws, (for all the precepts and laws of Christianity are, equally with the other, Christian doctrines), is implicated in the charge of neglecting to preach the Gospel, as much as he, who, overlooking the great truths that distinguish Christianity from Natural Religion, inculcates a morality detached from the Grace of the Gospel. As neither of them rightly divides the word of Truth, it is impossible that either the one or the other can allot to every man his portion of spiritual food. The congregation of the former may grow in acquaintance with a sort of profile Christianity; they may grow in attachment to separate parts of the system, and, by mistaking a part for the whole, may cheat themselves into a belief that they have attained the Christian character, merely from the orthodoxy of their sentiments. But they are in the greatest danger of contracting the spirit, if not the tenets of Antinomianism, and of substituting a few articles of their Creed, for universal holiness and obedience. This sort of religion is equally fatal to the best interests of men, as that which rests upon decorous manners without vital principle, and it is so much the worse, as it turns the noblest dispensation of the grace of God into licentiousness. The congregation of the latter may improve in the habits of a more correct deportment, and in all the studied decencies of polished life, but having no root, their religion, in time of trouble, will languish and die.

It would be a fool-hardy attempt to exculpate from the charge of preaching a defective Christianity, all who have obtained the name of Evangelical Preachers, either in the Church or out of it. There have been, and probably there are, in both, some individuals whose body of divinity wants proportion of parts, and whose rickety system, from the unequal distribution of nourishment, exhibits knotty points, and limbs distorted. But healthful vigour and symmetry constitute, not only the Evangelical doctrine, as it is portrayed in the Articles, Homilies, and Liturgy, of the Church; but also as it is displayed in the public instructions of her Evangelical Ministers, in general. Whoever peruses the discourses of Mr. Venn, of Mr. Gisborne, of Mr. Cooper, and of many others (and so far as sobriety of doctrine is concerned, they are a fair sample) will find that piety to God is not substituted for benevolence to men; nor purity of Faith for holiness of life; that though the Saviour's Atonement is laid down as the foundation, good works are the superstructure that rises upon it, and adorns the whole building. He will find that the love of God which is enforced, is the principle which inspires love to the human race, and teaches Christians to fill up every relative duty, in its proper place, as an act of obedience to the blessed Saviour.

The effects of Evangelical Preaching, in a parish which has not been accustomed to see those doctrines brought into the foreground of religious instruction, are generally soon conspicuous. The first general effect is that of some degree of astonishment, as upon persons who are made to feel impressions, to which formerly they have been strangers. Men are roused from a state of insensibility to behold, on the one hand, dangers immeasurable and

of infinite alarm, and on the other, hopes altogether new and of boundless expansion. In this state of conflicting motives, the minds of men are generally for some time absorbed, by the new views of time and of eternity, that burst upon their eyes. In the still and awful silence of meditation, they commune with their own hearts. The fears that gather and multiply around them, from the consciousness of having violated a law so tremendous, that the infliction of its penalty upon the surety of sinners, though he was possessed of the Divine as well as of the human nature, brought upon his soul the agonies of unutterable wo, harrow up their minds, and the angry cloud that lours over them threatening to burst, presages irretrievable ruin. On the opposite side the Gospel of reconciliation presents a sky, serene and mild, and opening through the blood of Jesus, a new and living way to the favour of God and to the blessings of the Kingdom of Heaven. Some by a gradual approximation to this fountain of life, come at last to drink of its healing waters, and experience their cleansing efficacy, as well as their invigorating powers. They take up their rest in the Saviour as their righteousness, their sanctification, and their redemption. The internal change that has passed in their minds, though perhaps its progress has hardly been perceptible, marks the soul to have been fertilized by the influence of Heaven. Where formerly all was either sterile and waste, or luxurious only with briars and thorns, a freshness and verdure, show that there is no longer a curse upon the ground, but that it has received the blessing from God. A new direction as well as a new force is given to all their powers. If they are heads of families, the worship of God becomes a regular part of their family economy.

In those houses in which no knee had knelt, and no tongue had been taught to adore the Giver of all good, an altar is consecrated to the God who had fed and led them all their days, and to that Redeemer who, by his precious blood-shedding, has restored them to the favour of God and to the hope of Glory. Their families present an appearance of order and of sentimental dignity, to which formerly they were strangers. By becoming spiritually-minded, their appetites and passions become more tame and subjugated ; and by intimate converse with the oracles of God, even their intellectual powers, assume a more vigorous tone, and the whole of their deportment acquires a consistency and an elevation, formerly unknown. These effects are often so marked and incontestible, that the cause cannot wholly escape observation. The happy influence of Evangelical truth, in resuscitating those energies, which alone can give to society a healthy and animated principle of virtue, has often been confessed. By the labours of a Clergyman, whose life and doctrine conspired to hold up a picture of genuine Christianity to his parishioners, it has often been found that in the lapse of no long term of years, a change has been effected, worthy of the Prophet's sublime description. "The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them ; and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly and rejoice even with joy and singing ; the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon : they shall see the glory of the Lord, and the excellency of our God."—And all this has been effected, without noise, bustle, or tumult. The silent influence of wholesome doctrine combined with that of pious example, like the united influence of the sun and

soft showers, has, by the blessing of God, converted a dreary wilderness into a field waving with luxurious fruits.

The causes that have contributed to expose the Evangelical Clergy to obloquy and reproach, have been many. One of these is the striking contrast that appears between their system of divinity, in which the Saviour is the *righteousness*, the *wisdom*, the *sanctification*, the *redemption*, the light and the life of a guilty world, and that of the Pelagians, in which man is considered as a creature, naturally the ally of virtue, in whose bosom good dispositions and correspondent feelings spontaneously rise, and in whose soul the love of God and of his species naturally glows, though some rude blasts of passion may unhappily, at times, check their luxuriant growth, and stunt their otherwise towering size. To such a system as the latter the incarnation of the Son of God, for the purpose of our Redemption; the bitter cup which for our sakes he drank off; the crown of thorns that for us he wore; the blood he shed, and the excruciating agonies that pierced his soul; the life he laid down; the Atonement he made to the justice of God for our sins; the promises of pardon offered us in his name; the promise of his Spirit to convince us of our sins, to purify us from them, and to create in us clean hearts; cannot even be appended, because the two systems can never be reconciled. An Atonement made by the blood of Him who is God as well as man, for persons who possess good hearts, and who have always led good lives; the Spirit of God to regenerate and sanctify characters naturally pious and holy, are contradictions so flagrant that the ingenuity of an archangel could hardly find any to be their parallel. Every Evangelical Preacher, lays the axe to

the root of the tree which human pride has planted, and sedulously watered, and it is no wonder if all who live under its shade are alarmed for their safety, and join in the cry, "they who have turned the world upside down, are come hither also." When a man has been all his life rearing a baseless fabric, and consecrating it as the temple of his sanguinary virtues, whoever attacks it threatens to expel him from the sanctuary of his own goodness, and to level the beautiful dome with the ground. "I hate him," said the impious monarch of the prophet, "for he doth not prophecy good concerning me, but evil." "We have found," says the orator Tertullus, as the advocate of the Jews against St. Paul, "this man a pestilent *fellow*." If we carefully search the Scriptures we shall find this to have been the cause of universal alarm, which summoned to arms the men of the world, against the preaching of the Prophets and Apostles. The preachers threatened to rob them of that, compared with which, their other trappings and gildings were but trash—the shrine that enchased their canonized merits.

The strictness of Evangelical Religion and morality is nearly as offensive to the men of the world, as the penitent and humble spirit which it breathes. The devotion it requires is that of the heart undivided, of the whole affections, and powers of the soul. It allows of no competition between God and the world, of no compromise between general obedience and the occasional indulgence of some particular and favourite gratification. It requires not only clean hands, but a pure heart. It proscribes the general maxims and principles of the men of the world, as a system founded in rebellion against God, and as consecrating those passions and pursuits which

his word anathematizes. It will admit no man's religion to be genuine, whose hope has not a purifying efficacy, and it consigns to the regions of everlasting misery, all who live in the habits of known sin. A religion and morality so rigid and uncomplying, must ever wear a forbidding aspect to those, who indulge *the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life*. To every man who does not strive to enter in by the strait gate, and to walk in the narrow way that leads to life, it is easy to see that the ministers of a religion so utterly repulsive of licentiousness, and so decidedly hostile to every evil work, must often appear as intruders, who disturb the false peace of the world. While some teachers of religion, by lowering its standard, and accommodating it to the ordinary practice of the world, *prophesy smooth things*, he who has no concessions to make, he who dares not desecrate his office, by dispensing with the laws of God, and by ruining the souls of men, must expect a reception hardly decent, from such as are resolved, at all hazards, not to part with their sins.

But the preachers of Christianity are not only to hold up to the world, in their doctrine, a picture of what it requires; but to exhibit the doctrine of Christ embodied in their own lives. They are to show its transforming influence, in assimilating their tempers to that of the Saviour, in animating their exertions to glorify God, as their Divine Master glorified Him, and in expressing the sanctity his Gospel has impressed on them, by correspondent dispositions and lives. To conciliate men to the doctrine of the Cross, there must be no sacrifices of personal ease which they are not willing to make; no labours which they will not cheerfully undergo; no hazards which they will not resolutely run; and no mortifications

to which they will not submit. Like St. Paul, they will "endure all things for the elects' sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus, with eternal glory."—But if, in the neighbourhood of those who combine and exhibit this assemblage of Christian graces, there should happen to be a minister invested with the same office, whose character, though becoming a man of the world, partakes nothing of their sublimating views ; who has chosen the Church, because it presents him with an honourable and elegant retreat from the business of the world, that he may, in the circle of fashionable society, enjoy the pleasures of gay life : in what point of view must the conduct of the former appear to the latter ? —They have received the same ordination, and have both declared that they trusted they were moved *by the Holy Ghost*, to undertake the *sacred office*. They have subscribed to the same doctrines and forms of religion ; but, in their aims and pursuits, the elevation of the one above the other is immeasurable. They move in regions more opposite, than those of the frigid and torrid zones. *His* hope is a richer benefice, or an additional one to that which he now possesses, and this hope he prosecutes with an avidity insatiable as the grave, while the feeding of the flock of God, which He purchased with his own blood, the very end of the sacred office, is neglected. Their hope, their joy, and their crown, is to rescue the souls of men from the dominion of ignorance and sensuality, and to see them walking in the brightness of holiness. *They* cannot look upon *his* prostitution of an office, more dignified than that of the highest seraph before the throne of God, without pity and indignation ; and he cannot behold their conversation in *Heaven*, without the most painful sensations of self-condemnation. While the image of *their*

self-denial and exalted devotion is forced upon his reflections, his mind is stung with remorse. He blushes for the part he has acted, and yet his addiction to a life of indulgence, will not suffer him to escape from the snare into which he has fallen, or to redeem his character. What at once prevents his reconciliation with himself, and exposes him to the censures of the more reflecting part of mankind,—the contrast that appears between their characters and his own, condemns him to feelings and pains which he must necessarily hide from the world. This combat ends in a fixed hatred of those who have broken his internal peace, and exposed his hypocrisy to the eyes of men. As *he* cannot rise to *their* elevation, his next attempt is to sink *them* to his *own* level. The general consistency of their lives is invulnerable, and presents no point of attack; but the best characters in this world, are not without their imperfections. These he tries to magnify into crimes, and what he cannot effect consistently with truth, he knows how to supply by fiction. But the fertility of his invention appears in nothing so much as in assigning base and unworthy motives to their actions, or in misrepresenting them. Their faith he represents as faction; their zeal for God as bigotry; the ardour of their devotion as fanaticism; their persevering labours for the salvation of men, as their love of popularity; their spirituality as their want of rationality; their attachment to the doctrine of Grace, as the spirit of opposition to good works. To these imputations he endeavours to give a circulation as wide as his influence reaches. In this disguise of character, the ministers of Evangelical Religion come, perhaps, to be represented to their Diocesan. The venerable man whose cares are feelingly alive for the interests of Religion, and whose situation does not, per-

haps, admit of a closer inspection into their aims, or of seeing their intentions through a clearer medium, is alarmed, and considers himself in duty bound to warn his Clergy against enthusiasm; whereas, if his Lordship had fully known the state of facts, he would have found it necessary to warn them against a spirit that secularizes the Ministers of Christianity, and sinks them into men of the world. There has, in our times, been an instance or two of this chance-medley of characters, in charges delivered by a respectable Prelate. It has been known, that in a charge in which Ecclesiastical sportsmen, leaders of the gay dance, the frequenters of the gaming table, and those more "familiar with a round of Ladyships," than with the afflicted of their parishes, were addressed, the whole weight of censure has fallen upon the laborious and exemplary ministers of Evangelical Religion. The scene recorded by Juvenal has again been acted :—

"Dat veniam corvis, vexat censura columbos."

*"Thus justice, while she winks at crimes,
Stumbles on innocence sometimes."*

The Evangelical Clergy stand at a distance from those scenes of dissipation and folly, in which a considerable number of other Ministers of religion are known to mingle. The Theatres, particularly, they avoid as the haunts of impurity and licentiousness, where wit is polluted by indelicacy, and serious religion is mentioned only to be ridiculed. Their abstraction from these public amusements, by which time is wasted, and the taste and morals of men are in danger of being contaminated, has brought upon them the charge of stiffness, preciseness, and Puritanism. It is known that the Bishops universally keep themselves without the circle of such seductive plea-

asures. The conformity of the Evangelical Clergy, with so high and decorous an example, cannot reasonably be objected to. It will be difficult to find a reason for the absence of the heads of the Clergy from these exhibitions that will not, with equal force, apply to all the ministers of religion. For "if the *first-fruit* be holy, the *lump* should also be holy; and if the *root* be holy, so also should the *branches* be."

Besides the Evangelical party in the Church who are correct and regular, and who are equally observant of its discipline as of its doctrines, there is another small body, equally tenacious of the latter, though but little attached to the former. These can, with equal readiness, conduct the liturgical worship, in a Church or Chapel of the Establishment, and the extempore prayers of the Dissenting and Methodist Meeting-house. The circulation of intercourse between the Clergymen of these two different bodies, is always languid. The regular Evangelical Clergy, how much soever they may approve, in other things, the piety and zeal of those who are regardless of the discipline of the Church, exceedingly blame their diverting them into irregular channels, when there are so many others in which their devotion may flow, in perfect consistency with their duty as sons of the Church. Of the latter party Dr. Haweis is the most distinguished person.

There are likewise in the Church a very considerable number of Clergymen, and many of them highly respectable, both for piety and learning, and also for active exertions in the cause of religion, who may be called Semi-Evangelical. The doctrine of the Atonement, and of the necessity of Divine influence to sanctify men, are topics not only recognized in their discourses, but topics, the importance of which, they endeavour to impress upon

the minds of their hearers. The morality which they inculcate, is a morality grafted upon Christianity, and intertwining itself around its trunk. The chief, if not the only, point of difference between them and the Evangelical body, seems to be on the subject of Justification. They cheerfully admit, that the only meritorious ground of our acceptance, is the obedience and Atonement of the Son of God, and they sometimes treat this subject with great force and eloquence, as well as with the feelings and language of humility. Still, however, they discover a reluctance, to assent to the doctrine of Justification without Works. They are alarmed for the interests of religion and morality. They know, that on the doctrine of Justification by Faith only, there is a coincidence of sentiment between those who are called Evangelical, and those who are Antinomians. The essential difference between the sentiments of these two parties,—that “with the first, Faith is considered as a *holy principle*, necessarily attended with good works, and that with the other, it is nothing more than the assent of the understanding, without any purifying influence,” escapes their notice. Both of the parties agree that our Faith does not justify us as an act of our own holiness ; but the former, by maintaining the inseparability of true Faith and holiness, sufficiently provide for the interests of piety and virtue ; whereas the Faith and Justification of the other, are nothing more than a visionary conceit, and altogether worthless. It were much to be wished that some good men, who confound the Evangelical with the Antinomian doctrine, on the head of Justification, would examine the subject more accurately. The misrepresentation is certainly, with them, not intentional. Many of them, if they could divest them-

selves of those modes of speaking, by which Justification and Sanctification are confounded, are building upon the same foundation, and resting their souls on the same hope that supports the faith of those who embrace a more Evangelical creed. It ought not, however, to be expected, that those who embrace the doctrine of Justification by Faith only, will, by admitting inaccurate definitions, on a subject of such vast importance, and that embraces one grand peculiarity of the Gospel, endanger the best interests of men, by enveloping in darkness a doctrine which St. Paul has placed in the clearest light. While they charitably believe that many whose statements of the doctrine are incorrect, have erred more in words, than in sentiment, erred more in defining their faith, than in forming it, they must faithfully exhibit the dangerous consequences of inadequate conceptions of the scriptural doctrine of Justification, even while they hope that many who are not sufficiently aware of them, escape from those consequences, in a great measure. It was precisely in this manner that St. Paul treated this subject, in his Epistle to the Galatians. "Whosoever of you," says he, "is justified by the law, is fallen from grace." "If righteousness come by the works of the law, Christ is dead in vain." "I fear that I have bestowed much labour on you in vain." "I stand in doubt of you." In this faithful manner he exposes the dangerous tendency of the doctrine of Justification by Works. Yet, in the same Epistle, he calls them the children of God, by faith in Christ Jesus.

It may not be unworthy of the consideration of the Evangelical body, both in the Church of England and in other denominations, whether even that venerable man of God, Luther, who pronounced the doctrine of Justification

by faith to be, the *articulus stantis aut cadentis Ecclesie*, the criterion of a standing or falling Church, did not seem to place a disproportionate, because a detached weight upon this important article of the Christian faith; and whether they themselves, by adopting it, do not appear to feel a greater predilection for one doctrine of Christianity, than for others of equal importance. Luther had a strong apology for giving a prominence to this doctrine, in the general agreement of all the orders in the Church of Rome, to depreciate, if not to bury it. Had he lived to see, as we have lived to see, the formation of Churches on Sandemanian principles, in which this doctrine is considered as almost the whole of Christianity; and a clear head in defining it, substituted for a sanctified heart that teaches to do the whole will of God, it is not improbable that he would have retracted his paradoxical description. The doctrine of internal Sanctification, and the necessary consequence of it, the faithful discharge of the duties we owe to God, and to our fellow-men, may, each of them, be termed with as much propriety, that which determines the state of a Church, as flourishing or decaying, as it is enforced or neglected. It is not the prevalence of any one single doctrine that will ascertain the prevalence of true religion in any Church, but the combined and co-operating harmony of all those great truths, in their regular proportions, and comely symmetry. Each one of them, if it be not joined in holy matrimony with the others, will be unavailing. Even in Christian Churches, we often see such zeal for one doctrine, as by lessening that for another, of equal value, presents the appearance of a body deformed. As in one of the first Christian Churches, there were schisms, while one contended for Paul, another for Apollos,

and a third for Peter ; so, among some Protestant Churches, one gives the preference to the doctrine of Justification, another to Sanctification, and another to the Relative Virtues. But all these are by God joined, and that Church which gives them all their equal dignity, has attained the most vigorous and healthy constitution. When one party over-rates the importance of any doctrine, detached from others, another advances a claim for *its* more favourite tenet, and a third party labours to prove, that the object of *its* preference is entitled to a superiority over both. Thus the doctrines of Christianity are made to assume a distorted aspect, and by being separated from each other, are necessarily deprived of that *compact strength*, which every joint supplies. It is in the spiritual, as it is in the natural body; a variety of parts is necessary, not only to health and vigour, but even to life. The heart, the lungs, the brain, though different, are all equally vital parts, and the destruction of any one of them is the destruction of the whole body.



ON THE MANNER OF PREACHING.

THE Church of Rome requiring implicit faith in her doctrines, and suspending the belief of individuals upon the testimony of the Church, has no other use for preaching, than merely to state to her members what her sentiments are, and to prescribe conformity to that standard. For individuals to examine the doctrines of the Church by the

word of God, would, according to her tenets, be both absurd and impious ; because the authority and meaning of Scripture depends wholly upon her testimony. According to her, it is sufficient that religion be a service in which they are devoutly engaged : but that it be a reasonable service, there is no necessity at all. Preaching, or an address to the understanding, can be of little service where the exercise of the intellect is not supposed to be wanted ; sermons in that Church are, accordingly, rare. The Reformers, taking the doctrines of the Scriptures as the guide of their faith, rendered the frequent explanation of these necessary, and as they admitted the necessity of addressing the heart and conscience, as well as of informing the judgment, sermons were considered as of indispensable obligation. It was by the preaching of the Gospel that Christianity was first propagated, and it is by the same means that the knowledge of its doctrines, and the practice of its duties, are to be preserved in the world. The English Reformers being sensible, that at the first establishment of the Protestant religion, preachers, well instructed themselves, and well affected to the doctrines of the Reformation, could not be found in sufficient numbers to instruct the whole nation, wisely had recourse to the following expedient. They composed and published two books of Homilies. The first book was published in the reign of Edward, and the second in that of Elizabeth. They are short discourses, combining the great truths of the Gospel, with the practical duties that rise out of them. They are faithful, sound, and animated discourses, and excellent models of Evangelical instruction. The style, indeed, has something of the venerable rust of antiquity, and will not be thought sufficiently polished for the taste of a fastidious

critic.—The Homilies were appointed “to be read in the Churches by the Ministers, diligently and distinctly, that they may be understood by the people.” The practice of reading the Homilies fell afterwards into disuse, and it was not long before other discourses, and many of them containing sentiments at variance with the doctrine of the Homilies, succeeded in their place. To this, in a great measure, the scarcity of Evangelical instruction, which so long prevailed in the Church, may be ascribed. Whenever the Homilies were diligently read to the people, it was impossible that godly and wholesome doctrine could be forgotten.

The Homilies indeed were intended only to supply, for a season, that want of correct information and scriptural taste, in many ministers, with which a transition so great and so sudden, from popery to the original purity of Christian doctrine, would necessarily be attended. The progress of biblical knowledge, it was to be expected, would both accelerate and invigorate the means of forming a better informed, and a more Evangelical Ministry. When such a ministry was prepared, and qualified to undertake the important office of instruction, the regular reading of the Homilies was fairly superseded. It is not the intention of Providence, that the labours of one generation, either in natural or in divine science, should render unnecessary the exertions of those generations which are to succeed. The improvements, which are the spoils of time, that become the inheritance of succeeding ages, are by them to be conveyed down with usury, to those who are soon to fill their places. The public instructor, who adds nothing to the collected stock, who has neither a head to think, nor a heart to feel, but as it is set in motion by the labours of

others, and who knows no higher office than reading what others have composed, is little better than a machine, worked by an invisible hand. Should the discourses of a Minister of Christianity fall far below the standard of those who have gone before him, it is still some praise, that they are not wholly borrowed; that they are in some degree, his own. It is much to be lamented that the authority of names justly high in the empire of literature, (an empire from which the Kingdom of Heaven should never in this world be separated), has sometimes given a sort of consecration to habits, inimical both to the Clergy and to the Laity. Before Mr. Addison's eulogy on the practice of Clergymen reading printed sermons, in the public offices of religion, it appears that by many ministers the habit had been formed, and to a considerable extent had spread in the Church. The sanction of his name was thought to give it sufficient confirmation, and with amazing rapidity it became prevalent. Some divines were even forward to boast, that they had never composed a sermon. This disgraceful custom, by which the ministers of Christianity were converted into preaching-engines, bringing nothing but lungs to the service of religion, contributed mightily to depress the healthful vigour, inspired by the doctrines of the Reformation. He who wanted energy to collect and to compose, felt the destitution of it also in thinking, and in examining what were the proper subjects, and what was the proper mode of Christian instruction. Many of the laity, from the frequent recurrence of the same discourses at stated intervals, knew they had nothing new to expect, and, as soon as the text was read, composed themselves to rest. Others thought that they could read printed sermons at

home, and either deserted the services of the Church altogether, or sought them where a more animated address was better calculated to rouse, and to enchain their attention. This vacuity of thought, and of exercise corresponding to the duties of their high calling, naturally superinduced in the Clergy habits of dissipation and the waste of time; and the pleasures of the saint were merged in those of the sportsman.

If the business of a public instructor may be properly discharged by *one* minister of religion, by reading the compositions of *another*, why may not all the ministers in the kingdom discharge their duty in the same manner; and by retailing the thousands of sermons already in a state of requisition, dedicate to other purposes the hours of study and meditation? The stock of sermons already prepared may, by proper husbandry, hold out for a thousand years, and indeed, for ever. The present enormous expense of an University education, and of a competent library is, upon this plan, only a waste of money and of time, which may be better laid out on other employments. The spending of a few months under the tuition of some experienced actor, who can impart the various melodies of accent, emphasis, and tone, the only acquisitions that will be requisite, will be sufficient; and learning and piety may be left to sink together.—If the practice of reading *printed*, be only exchanged for that of reading *engraved* sermons, “that cheat the eyes of gallery critics by a thousand arts,” matters are still on precisely the same footing. The dignitaries of the Church have seldom or never descended to such pitiful conduct.

With respect to the best mode of delivering Sermons, the opinions even of great men have been discordant. The Clergy of the Church of England have, in general,

been accustomed to read their sermons from their notes. This mode possesses some advantages. It admits of greater correctness, and is better adapted, than any other, to preserve unbroken a chain of reasoning, and to prevent repetition. It provides against any incidental dissipation of ideas, which may proceed from weakness of nerves, or any sudden cause of perturbation. Sermons preached before Courts, and before men of highly cultivated talents, as at the Assizes, may perhaps be delivered in this manner, with more propriety and effect, than in any other. In the addresses that are made to ordinary congregations, its disadvantages are considerable. It will hardly admit of that action, which gives energy to a discourse. It is with difficulty that it is susceptible of animation, and generally appears stiff and awkward, making the Preacher seem like a man moving in armour. It wants the vivacity and the fire, that are necessary to awaken and engage the attention of the hearers. The style is generally too laboured, and by this means, the ideas escape the observation of those, who cannot search for truths that do not present themselves at the first view, and float on the surface of the subject. It has almost been peculiar to the Clergy of the Church of England. A considerable number of the Clergy of the Church of Scotland, have lately adopted it; but there it is extremely unpopular, though it has been recommended by Dr. Campbell, and some other writers of literary eminence. Preachers among the Roman Catholics never adopt it; and in almost all the Foreign Churches, the teachers of religion employ another mode of religious instruction. The same thing may be said of the English Dissenters, with the exception of those who have embraced Pelagian, Arian, or Socinian sentiments. The

celebrated Dean Swift, in a letter to a young Clergyman, expresses his decided preference of another manner of address.

Another mode of preaching is, from notes fully written and committed to memory. This method supposes the language as well as the sentiments to have been previously adjusted, and the structure of the sentences to be preserved in the elocution. This mode of address is not without its advantages. It appears more natural and free than a discourse read from a manuscript. The gesture and action of the speaker are less incumbered, and generally more impressive and animated. It is attended however with one almost insuperable difficulty, that the memory of most men is not sufficiently retentive for so arduous an undertaking. Bishop Jewel is said to have possessed such powers of retention, that with the assistance of art he could, with once reading over his discourses, pronounce them exactly as they were composed. This method accustoms the mind to think accurately, to clothe its ideas with correctness if not with elegance, and the preacher to say no more than what is necessary. Every preacher who does not read his discourses, will do well to habituate himself to this method as much as may consist with the frequency of his public exhibitions.

Another method of preaching is to compose fully, and to commit to memory the train of ideas, without overwhelming it with the load of words, trusting that the ideas will clothe themselves, with proper words in proper places. This mode gives scope to mental energy, but will hardly admit of the correctness and compression of the other two.

A fourth mode of preaching consists in arranging the

plan and in setting down the heads of discourse, and either carrying them to the pulpit in short notes, that at the different pauses of the sermon they may meet the preacher's eye, or in fixing them on the memory, without carrying notes to the pulpit, and filling up the illustrations in such words as present themselves on the spur of the occasion. This method requires accuracy in forming the plan; promptness, and vigour of mind in prosecuting it; considerable stores of knowledge at the preachers command, and a copious and easy flow of diction. This manner of address will generally attain a less degree of accuracy, both in the thoughts and language, than any of the former; but it will, if ably conducted, generally be found to pierce more forcibly, and to sink more deeply into the minds of the hearers. It is perhaps the best calculated to rouse and to alarm the inconsiderate; to awaken attention; to strike the mind with sentiments of awe and reverence; to melt into pity; to elevate the affections; to storm the citadel of the heart that has long been fortified by infidelity; to impress and to rivet conviction; to convey instruction, and to fix the seal upon it. Great care should however be taken to lay it under such restraints, as will neither suffer it to evaporate into enthusiasm, to swell into the turgid, to rise into the boisterous, nor to sink into the coarseness of violent and vulgar eloquence.—It has one considerable disadvantage. Though it admits of care in forming the plan, in dividing and arranging the heads, in ramifying the principal ideas, in giving order and dependence to the whole discourse; yet as that care extends only to the leading sentiments, it leaves the secondary ones to be formed in the hurry of reasoning or declamation, and in the agitation and fervour of address, a speaker has neither time nor calm-

ness to weigh or to cull his thoughts. It is much better adapted to those who have long been familiar with the heads of divinity, who have often reflected and written upon its awful truths, and are possessed of ample information with respect to its doctrines, the state of Theological controversies, and the intellectual system of moral combinations, than to such as possess but a small stock of knowledge, and that stock very imperfectly arranged. Young preachers should be extremely cautious how they form their habits of composing. Penury of sentiment, and incorrectness of language are likely to result from a habitude of this kind. Men, whose habits of thinking and speaking have been matured by study and time, may use it with propriety and effect. Bishop Beveridge has composed four volumes of *Skeletons* of this kind, but as he intended them only for his own use, their posthumous publication was exposed to many disadvantages. Mr. Simeon has furnished students and young preachers with, we think, six hundred *Skeletons*; the merits of which rise far above any other specimens of the same kind that our language supplies. Archbishop Secker, speaking of reading sermons and of extempore discourses, observes, "There is a middle way, used by our predecessors, of setting down, in short notes, the method and principal heads, and enlarging on them in such words as present themselves at the time. . Perhaps, duly managed, this would be the best." Dr. Johnson in his life of Dr. Watts, observes of that eminent Divine, "Such was his flow of thoughts, and such his promptness of language, that in the latter part of his life he did not precompose his cursory sermons; but having adjusted the heads and sketched out some particulars, he trusted for success to his extempore powers."

In common Congregations, an address that is pronounced without reading, is generally much more popular and impressive, than one which is read. The former was among the means employed by the fathers and followers of the Methodists; and in the formation and extension of their societies, its influence is acknowledged to have been great. The same method of teaching is generally employed with success by the Evangelical Dissenters. It seems wonderful that so few of the Clergy should oppose, with arms so powerful, the inroads made upon the Church; and that the attack should be so seldom repelled with the same weapons with which it is made. If, while the fervour of the war rages, and some are every day deserting the Church, and swelling the number of those who have abandoned her interests, the Clergy are employed in balancing the niceties of language, they may come to find abundance of employment, when they shall have nothing else to attend to. No Clergyman should be ignorant of the laws of composition, or unskilled in the arts of reducing them to practice. But the art of composing with elegance, is a rare talent, and even the most successful attempts of the general part of those who have had the advantage of a liberal education, will not be found in composition, to rise above the state of mediocrity. To a common Country Congregation, the refinements of style are both uninteresting and useless. The attempt, as a great wit expresses it, is like that of hewing blocks of wood with the fine edge of a razor. A common axe will do infinitely better.

The last mode of address is when the preacher, with little or no adjustment of plan, either in his mind or committed to paper, ventures into the pulpit trusting

to the supplies of the moment, for the filling up of the great lines of public instruction. Though the three former methods of instruction are generally called extempore preaching, it is only the last that can with propriety be called by that name. It leaves almost every thing to the impressions of the moment, and provides almost nothing for the proper discharge of an office, of the highest trust and responsibility. In this manner, it is true, that the Apostles preached the Gospel. But the Spirit of inspiration who resided in them, rendered preparation unnecessary. It was given them in the moment of address what they should say, and the Spirit of their Father spoke in them. But this promise was peculiar to them, and cannot be claimed by the ordinary Ministers of Christianity. The latter have the promise of the Spirit to help their infirmities, but not to supersede their studies. What talents soever any man may possess, and what knowledge soever he may have collected, he runs a considerable hazard by venturing into the pulpit without preparation. For a man of ordinary talents, in ordinary cases, especially in a country where the fine arts are in a high state of cultivation, to address a promiscuous congregation without having previously arranged the subjects to which he directs their attention, seems to be an act of temerity that attaches to it the crime of presumption.

In modern times, Knox and Whitfield, appear to have been the most distinguished preachers, both for the excellencies and for the faults of popular elocution. Both of them were men of exalted and exemplary piety; but in neither of them was that piety exempted from considerable mixtures of enthusiasm. Both of them possessed powers of oratory, of the highest order, which, by proper discipline, might have been restrained from

eccentric flights, without breaking their force. Both of them might have retained the sacred heat of the altar, without mingling it with wild fire. Both of them were accustomed to seize, and to hurry away with them, the minds of men. They could soften their hearers into tenderness, rouse them to reflection, awaken them to remorse, and call forth the strongest emotions of terror. They often, by a sort of electrical shock, communicated the same sensations to multitudes, and dissolved thousands into tears. But their manner was sometimes rather furious than vehement, and their similes more striking than comely. Their language was unpolished, and while the torrent of their eloquence roared and swept every thing away with it, it flowed with a turbid as well as with an impetuous stream. In times still later, three orators celebrated for their pulpit talents have risen to great eminence in this country, Dr. Kirwan, Dean of Killala, of the United Church of England and Ireland; Mr. Struthers, in the Presbyterian Relief Connexion, in Scotland; and Mr. Spencer, of the Independent Dissenters in England.

The state of the Church of England, with respect to Evangelical Religion, has for many years been progressively improving, and promises an increasing improvement. The influence of the lamented Mr. Perceval, a man of genuine piety and worth, in promoting that cause, is supposed to have been very considerable. The friends of Evangelical piety, in the Church of England, number among the many excellent men, who adorn the Gospel by their example, as much as they study to promote its interests by all other means in their power, Lord Harrowby, and the late Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Hon. N. Vansittart. Of the bench of Bishops, besides

the venerable Barrington, Bishop of Durham, the friend of the excellent Porteus, Bishops Burgess, Ryder, &c. &c. all of them distinguished by their learning, as well as by their piety, are considered as ornaments of Evangelical Religion. It would be to no purpose to give an account of the large body of respectable Clergymen, who have not only adopted Evangelical sentiments, but who are also the living witnesses of their transforming efficacy. This eminent revival of vital religion in the Church of England, its friends consider as a sufficient refutation of what has, by many Dissenters, been considered as a Theorem,—*that all Religious Establishments are utterly inconsistent with the purity of Christianity; and that no extensive circulation of Evangelical truth and holiness, can be expected in a National Church.*

THE END.

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